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# Story of The Mary Fisher Home

New York City, 1<sup>st</sup> of April,

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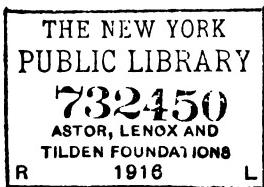


The Story of  
*The*  
Mary Fisher Home

By **MARY A. FISHER**

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MARY A. FISHER

*To Mrs. G. Thurston Seabury, to whom the Mary Fisher  
Home is indebted for its beautiful building at Mt.  
Vernon, New York—the Seabury memorial—  
this volume is respectfully dedicated  
by the author.*

*At Tiverton, Decr. 2/16.*

*904*



# The Story of The Mary Fisher Home

Mt. Vernon, New York                           Tenafly, New Jersey

A Home for those who have labored in Literature, Art, Education, Music—or any of the various professions—non-sectarian.

How it came to be founded, and an account of some of the curious and peculiar characters that it has sheltered—grotesque, comical, pathetic. Also one of the saddest cases in the annals of the White Slave traffic.

## THE POE COTTAGE—THE POE PARK

The true story of the noble effort of Mrs. M. Fay Peirce to restore the home of the poet, Edgar Allan Poe, as it was when he lived there with his charming young wife—the grounds around the cottage so picturesque in their rural simplicity and beauty—and the later effort of Mrs. John C. Coleman in its behalf.

A letter from Edwin Bjorkman to President Woodrow Wilson showing what is done by some other nations in the cause of literature—he suggests that something be done as a national recognition to the American man of letters.



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# The Mary Fisher Home

## CHAPTER I.

"What first prompted you to start such a Home?" is a question that has often been asked of me.

Well, the first idea came to me when a girl in my teens. I was visiting Hampstead, my birthplace in England, and my Mother was showing me where Leigh Hunt and other literary celebrities used to live when she was a girl, when my attention was attracted to a handsome house and spacious grounds, and I said, "I wonder who lives there."

"Oh, that's a Home for governesses," answered a man who was carrying in some parcels at the gate.

Now, at that time, there was no pension in this country for public school teachers, and I remembered that when we were in New York we used to see an old lady going on her crutches to teach in a public school, and we knew a little of her history—that she had been many years a widow, and had struggled to keep a home for an invalid sister, and her little boy, and could not save anything for the time of need.

As I looked at that beautiful Home, and thought of that crippled teacher I said to my Mother—

"How nice it would be if we had a Home like that for aged teachers in New York."

After that, I was entered as a student in a Parisienne *pension*, where many, like myself, came for the study of the French language and literature.

Among them was a young lady of about twenty-five years, who was a sort of literary protégée of the King of Sweden. She had written some articles for the papers which had attracted his notice, and he thought he saw in her a rising young genius, provided she had the opportunity of a wider education, so he paid for her to come to Paris, and met her expenses at the *pension*.

On our voyage home to New York we had for a fellow passenger a gentleman who had been secretary to Sir John Franklin, the explorer, and he often spoke of the sad death of that great man, who had made it the aim of his life to find a passage through the Arctic Ocean; but the very season when he set out with his well-equipped expedition, there was no break in the eternal ice, as there had been in years before, and they all perished.

One expedition after another was sent out by the British government, but all in vain. Then Lady Franklin, who was a devoted wife, spent her own fortune to equip an expedition, and they were successful. They found the bones, with the records all beautifully recorded and sealed.

There was also on board a young man who had lived in the house of Macaulay, the historian, who could tell of conversations he had heard between Macaulay and other literary stars, and I heard a great deal said about pensions awarded to men who had given their lifework for the benefit of the nation.

That night, when my Mother and I were alone together, I said: "How nice it would be if we could have government pensions like that."

"We have enough wealthy and charitable Americans to advocate it," answered my Mother; "it only requires the right people to start it."

"I wish I could find the right people," I said.

Some years afterward I was teaching in a girl's private school, and it was one of my duties to go out with the young ladies when they took their daily walks, or made their purchases.

One day, when we were in a music store, selecting some new songs, the clerk leaned over the counter, and showing us a new waltz said. "Here is something that is very popular, and the poor old man who composed it, is dying in a tenement house round the corner."

"Do you know much about him?" one of the girls asked.

"All I know is, that he is old and poor, and the janitor's wife does what she can for him. He has probably outlived all his family, and his friends have forgotten him, or he may be too proud to appeal to them; it happens that way sometimes."

On the next Saturday, when the school closed, two of us found our way to the old composer.

He was lying on a cot-bed; the room was miserably cold, and barely furnished. There were rude pine shelves all around the walls laden with music.

"You see he didn't belong to any church, so he couldn't be got into any of the church homes," said the janitress.

Again it occurred to me that we ought to have a non-sectarian home for brain-workers, such as this poor old man, and for years the thought was brewing in my brain, without taking any tangible form. I remembered that in Europe pensions were often accorded to those who, during their lifetimes, had been of some benefit to the nation, and it seemed to me that in this country the people must do what the government failed to do, and I

hoped that in time we might have a national fund for this purpose.

However, this was too gigantic a scheme for the present, and I had to be contented to let it simmer down to just one Home at the best. But I was only an obscure woman, teaching in a school. I felt I should only be laughed at if I broached this subject to any one. I had no wealthy friends, and what could I expect to do.

However, I could not give it up. In all my quiet moments it was present with me. I believe I took a whole year to decide upon a name for the Home. At last, it came to me. While in France, I had seen that so often a large house is called a hotel. So I said to myself that I would call my home the Home-Hotel. Hitherto, I had not spoken to anyone about it. However, one day I summoned courage, and laid my plan before my good father. Now, he had some years before given me six hundred dollars to publish a book which I had written, and which like many another such literary ventures had not proved a financial success, and consequently he was somewhat prepared to hear from me something of a chimerical and visionary character. But he listened attentively to my project.

Finally he said, "Well, you can but try. I will give you this house to start with." I was delighted. I was now teaching in a boys' public school, but that summer, instead of taking a vacation, I busied myself helping to paint and paper, and furnish the spare rooms according to my taste, and within the bounds of my very limited exchequer. My father said I reminded him of a visit he once paid to an abbey in England, where the abbess, who had been a lady of title, showed him her hands, saying, "Look, my hands are as hard as any man's. I have

done all sorts of mechanical work and enjoyed it." I am sure that abbess was not any happier in her work than I was in mine.

## CHAPTER II.

My next step was to start out on my voyage of discovery—looking for people who would give me their names as in sympathy with this project. I did not ask for money.

The first person that I called upon was Daniel Huntington, the artist. I read my paper to him. He sat thinking for a while, then he said he approved of it, if it could be done, but he wouldn't give his name to it, because he was afraid it would fall through. However, he gave me the names of several people to call upon, and I began to make my rounds, and introduced myself the best way I could by writing on my card that Mr. Huntington, the artist, had suggested that I call. But it was a discouraging affair; they always suggested some one else, and would say:

"You ought to call on Mr. So and So; he has lots of money, I should think he would like to do this thing; as for myself, I have so many things on hand that I couldn't go into it."

One gentleman said—"Now be sure to go to Mr. A., he has married a very rich woman, and this is the very thing that he ought to be interested in, for he was once poor enough himself."

But Mr. A. declared that he had no time to attend to anything.

However, that good man, President Barnard of Columbia, received me very kindly. He told me how much

he appreciated modest beginnings, and gave me an account of how frugally he and his wife had lived during the early years of their married life. I felt very proud when he offered me one of the college rooms for a meeting. Also, I had the pleasure of meeting Mr. and Mrs. St. Gaudens, and their little nine-year-old boy, Homer, Mrs. Chauncey Depew, Miss Elizabeth Bisland, Mrs. William Choate, Mrs. Andrew Carnegie, and hold in affectionate remembrance some who have passed away—Mrs. Embury, Mrs. Esther Herrman and Mrs. A. F. Wainwright. Gen. Jas. Grant Wilson was for some time our Treasurer. Mr. Frank E. Vaughan often gave me valuable advice, and much personal service in starting our Home at Tenafly.

I was not in the 400, but I had one last hope. Among the names that Mr. Huntington had given me, was that of Mrs. Vincenzo Botta, a lady who drew around her the literati of this country, and of any other country who happened to light upon these shores. She used to have at her weekly receptions the most fashionable people of the city. But then Mrs. Botta was in Europe and would not return for many months. At last she came, and found my letter waiting for her. She seemed pleased with the project. She appointed a time for me to call, and Mrs. Inez Ludlow, the artist, who had entered earnestly into the project from the beginning, accompanied me. Mrs. Botta gave me her visiting list of two hundred ladies, and offered me her spacious drawing-rooms for our meetings, saying, "The work will be endless." How often since then have I thought of her words, for the work has been endless.

At last, the important day came. A large array of fashionable ladies responded to the call, and I believed my success was assured. But alas, there were many

minds among them. One prominent speaker said that she had long wanted to see such a home as an adjunct to the Woman's Hospital, and that it must be for women only. Quite a number agreed with her. Another lady thought it ought to belong to the Woman's Exchange, and a large number agreed with her, that it should be for women only. I saw the thing was drifting away from me, still I would not give up. I said it must be a home for brain-workers both men and women—those of the various professions without regard to age or creed.

Then Mrs. Botta spoke of Edgar Poe, whom she had known intimately, and that he had told her how disappointed he was when he received only ten dollars for his poem of "The Raven."

"Edgar Poe," said one of the ladies, starting to her feet, "if you are going to take such men into your home, I for one would rather throw my money into the fire." Mrs. Botta had been smiling in her chair at the discussions, but she now rose and said, "My dear madam, Edgar Poe has been much misunderstood. No one knew him better than I did. He was always welcome at my house, and I can vouch for this fact, that one glass of wine would go to his head, and make him dizzy. I knew him when he worked as a fag on a magazine most faithfully, and I am sure he was generally underfed."

Finally the company dispersed; nothing had been accomplished, but a few remained behind who agreed with me, promising their support if I could get members enough. Among them was Miss Kate Sanborn, who said with a sigh, "A home for old authors and artists! My! what a company of cranks! What will you do with them?"

But notices had crept into the public press, and appeals had begun to reach me. Some cases were so pathetic,

that I determined to wait no longer. So with a small subscription list, and my own modest income, I decided to make the venture, and we started the Home at 71 Java Street, Brooklyn, in the house my Father had given me.

We held our meetings at the house of Mrs. Ludlow, and made new friends and subscribers, among them Mrs. O. M. Harper, Mrs. Marie T. Lange, Miss Leila R. Ramsdell, Mrs. R. T. Auchmuthy, Mrs. Henry Lewis Morris, Mrs. William P. Clyde, Mrs. M. Fay Peirce, Mrs. Leon Hess, Mrs. Esther Herrman, Mrs. Chas. S. Homer, Mrs. John Hone, Mrs. William C. Osborn, Mrs. Theo. Harris, Mrs. G. H. Warren, Mrs. Chas. E. Sherman, Mrs. E. F. Shepherd, and many others who have been loyal to the Home ever since. For many years Mrs. Ludlow was our faithful Treasurer.

### CHAPTER III.

The first guest in our Home was an aged American actress. I met with her through going one day into one of the offices of the Charity Organization Society. The agent had upon her table a quantity of dolls' leather shoes beautifully made, of all different colors, and of various sizes to suit every kind of doll. These were only fifteen cents a pair.

#### THE OLD ACTRESS.

"How can any one afford to make them for such a price?" I asked.

"Ah, but she is a very poor old lady," said the agent, "and that is all the stores pay her; she can make several

pairs in a day, and is very glad to get fifteen cents; after buying the materials, it leaves her ten cents' profit."

After the old actress came to us I was often amused at the little incidents in the story of her life which she told us. Her husband had been the manager of a small theatrical company that travelled about the country. When he died she was too old for the stage, as her voice was gone. Like many another, she thought if she came to New York, she could find something to do, for she was intelligent and well educated. But nothing turned up; her only qualification for business was her fine needlework; and no business house or dressmaker wanted a poor shabby-looking old lady. She found her money was running out. She took a room in a miserable neighborhood, where rents were low, and I found her in a wretched tenement with very little furniture; there was a little dark closet supposed to be a bedroom. But she had no use for this. I did not see any bed, but across the room a hammock was hung, and she told me this was where she slept, as it kept her free from anything obnoxious in the shape of vermin.

"Before I came to your Home I had some comical experiences," she said one day. "I had heard that they gave out provisions to the poor at the City Hall once a week during the winter, but that they required a letter of reference from some respectable citizen.

"As I was a stranger in New York and didn't know a single soul, what was I to do for a letter? I thought the matter over; then a bright idea occurred to me, and as I write a good hand, I sat down and wrote the letter myself, saying that the bearer was a poor woman, honest and respectable, etc., and I signed my own name. I said to myself, 'It can't be a forgery, since I have signed my own name,' and I posted down to the City Hall. But

the place was shut up, and I found it was a holiday. I had only a few cents left, and was feeling faint, for I had walked a long way; then, on Third Avenue, I saw a sign, 'The Charity Organization Society.' I thought perhaps there would be ladies there who would buy some of my dolls' shoes. I told the agent my story—that I had to wait till next week to get the desired provisions from the City Hall. She seemed to be very sorry for me, and she gave me twenty-five cents from her own pocket; this kept me another week in food, for I ate mostly oatmeal, which is cheap and nourishing, and my rent had been paid in advance for the month.

"So on the following Monday I hurried down to the City Hall with my letter. Several people with baskets were coming out. One Irish woman said, 'All they guv us today wus herrin's and perates, if I'd h' known that, I wouldn't a come, 'twasn't worth a spendin' shoe leather for.' However, I pushed my way in, and said to a policeman who was in the hall, 'I have a letter, where shall I go?' He pushed open a door, and pointed to a fat man sitting on a platform. To this potentate I went and offered my letter, which he took and read carefully. Then with a good-natured smile on his fat face he handed the letter back to me saying, 'All right, missus, but the stuff is all given out for today—won't be any more till next week.'

"When I came out I found the Irish woman who had grumbled at the provision; she was coming my way. 'Was this yer fust time comin' here?' she asked. 'I never seen yer before. It was a poor lot they guv out today.' I told her that I should have been very glad of a herring and a few potatoes. We walked on a while, and when she came to her own corner she said, 'Look here; take this here herrin', I've got better 'an this at home,' and

she put in my basket a large fat herring and two big potatoes. I didn't know how to thank her enough. That evening I had a feast; the herring and potatoes lasted me two days, and then you called on me."

## NOT A LUTHERAN.

A German society was interested in an old gentleman, who had spent some forty years in this country, but could speak very little English. No one seemed to know how he had made a living. He called himself an artist, but this could not be verified in any way, as he had only a few very poor specimens to show. It was supposed that his wife, who was now dead, had been a hard working woman, and that she had supported him. However, we took him in, and gave him some sweeping to do. When he had been with us about a year, I heard that there was a Lutheran Home for old men, and I applied to the Lutheran minister in his behalf, for I felt that he had more claim there than he had upon us, for we had so many applicants who could not be taken into any other Home.

"I know him well," said the minister. "I knew his wife, but he wouldn't come to church with her, and so, as he is not a Lutheran in good standing, I shall not interest myself in him. There are reasons why they would not take him into the Isabella Home, and the right place for him is the city almshouse."

However, while he was very unhappy at the thought of leaving us to go to the almshouse, a sister-in-law of his turned up, and said she could not let the husband of her sister go to such a place, and she took him home with her, much to our relief.

My next guest was a bright old lawyer, who had been taking care of an idiotic boy in return for his board, rather than be a burden to his friends.

He was nearly eighty years old, and was breaking down under the strain. He was most grateful for a shelter with us. The poet Whittier was interested in an afflicted young woman, the sister of a deceased young poet, and wrote to me about her. We offered her a welcome, and through her made a friend of Phillips Brooks, as there was no home of this kind in Boston. Soon we began to fill up.

Certainly we had a few cranks who tried my patience. One would not come to her meals, but insisted on lowering a little basket from her window, and having her food sent up to her by this method. She was not more than forty, had been a beautiful girl, but determined to live shut up by herself. She made translations of plays and stories. I had found her in a little room with five cents' worth of peanuts and a cup of milk for her dinner. Mrs. Bottome, of the King's Daughters, sent twenty dollars in her behalf.

I learned how very little some such people get accustomed to live upon. Another told me that a dollar and a quarter per week was all she spent for years upon nourishment. "And what could you get for that?" I asked. "What did I get? Why, all I wanted," she answered. "I brought my living down to a science. On Sunday I ate meat. On Monday, I ate cereals. On Tuesday, vegetables. On Wednesday, nuts and fruits. Thursday, biscuits and milk. Friday, bread and fish. Saturday, bread and jam, and cocoa. So you see, in the course of a week, I had had a little of everything."

## AN AGED JOURNALIST.

George William Curtis knew an aged journalist, in very needy circumstances, who had lost his grip on the *New York Times*, where he had been employed for many years, and he spent a winter with us.

"Your shoes are very old," I said to him one day, "I must get you a new pair."

"You needn't go to that expense," he answered, "give me thirty-five cents and I'll come back to you well shod." At dinner time he appeared with a very decent pair of gaiters, saying, "I exchanged my old shoes and twenty-five cents for these. There are places on the East Side where they make a business of this sort of trade."

## ONE OF THE ROGUES.

One cold winter day, a young man came to our basement door, and asked if we could give him some work—he was willing to do anything. He had a letter from some clergyman who said that he had belonged to some opera troupe, and was stranded in the city. His neat appearance and intelligence interested me, and I took him in. I found he knew considerable about marketing, and he often went errands for me. One day he said to me, "I don't want to deceive you, I will be frank with you. I have been under a cloud; I have been in prison, but don't be afraid to trust me, I assure you it was not for any dishonesty—it was called a misdemeanor."

For some time he did my errands, for he was a very good caterer, and seemed to know where to find bargains, and the goods were always sent home C. O. D. But one day, I gave him a five-dollar gold piece, and my valise to bring some wares from the market. It was

Saturday. That night he did not return. In the morning when the journalist came in to breakfast, he said—“Well, your young man has cleaned me out; your valise accommodated all my wardrobe. Now, I have my idea about him and when I come back, you will see whether I am right.”

He went out, and when he returned he said, “I found his picture in the Rogues’ Gallery.”

Of course, we heard no more of him.

By the end of the winter, the journalist was completely built up again, and was very anxious to get to work. Some one told him of a wealthy butcher, somewhere in New Jersey, who had retired from business, and had a great desire to start a newspaper in the town, and he had plenty of money to put into it. This was a chance for our journalist, which he was glad to profit by, and I heard it proved a success.

Often we were able to tide people over with rest and nourishment until they were able to take up work again.

#### THE YOUNG POET.

“Can you give a young man something to do in return for a Home?” a lady once said to me. “It is one of those difficult cases to handle, for he is proud, sensitive, and poor, and one does not like to hurt his feelings.”

I had heard of this young man, I had read the little volume of poems which he had issued, and had been pleased with them; and I could understand how sensitive he was about his poverty.

I had often had such cases come before me, so I wrote to him in the same strain as I had sometimes written to others. I told him I was looking for some one who would come and live in the Home and do some writing

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occasionally, and that I could not afford to pay a salary for it.

He came that very evening with his few belongings. I saw at once that the ravages of consumption had already begun their work, and that lack of nutrition was probably the principal cause.

As we became better acquainted, he was less reserved and reticent. I learned that he had half-starved himself to save money enough to publish his first book of poems. Like all young writers, he thought if he once got before the public his future was made. He sent a copy of the book to various publications, hoping to see a review of his poems, but none came. He sent a copy to the poets —Stedman, Morris, Markham and others, who read his work with pleasure, were glad to make his acquaintance, and kindly introduced him into the drawing rooms of some of the most cultured people. When they sat down to supper it was often the best meal he had eaten in a long time.

At these evening coteries he would often read some of his new poems—for he was a prolific writer—which were always received with marked applause, which was very gratifying. But his poems did not sell, and he finally became very despondent. His wardrobe had become very shabby, but he had no money to purchase any better, and so he could no longer accept the invitations to the evening parties.

One of the ladies who believed that she saw in him a rising poet, said she could not get him out of her mind, and she took a great deal of trouble to look him up, and write to me about him. As time went on, his cough became worse, and he grew weaker and weaker until the end came.

Among his papers we found the address of an aunt of his, who seemed to be a woman well-to-do, and we informed her of his death. She came, and made arrangements for his funeral; she was apparently an unsympathetic and hard-hearted woman. When the young minister had concluded the service, and the undertaker was removing the remains, she said:

"Why do such poor fellows persist in writing books, when they can't make a living, he had better be a carpenter or a plumber, and leave the rich men to write books. He couldn't sell his poems. What was the use of writing them?"

The young minister smiled and added, "But it would hardly do for us to depend only on our rich men for our literature."

#### CHAPTER IV.

Never shall I forget a young woman of about thirty-five—an excellent pianist, at one time a successful teacher, but finally a cripple, and entirely without means or friends to help her. I was so glad that we had a home to offer her. She had some selfish cousins, who lived in an old mansion in Connecticut, that had belonged to her grandfather. "Never let her have any money," they said to me, "for if you do, she will be travelling to us, and we cannot have her."

One day I found her crying pitifully. "Grandpa left that place to all of us," she said, "and I have as much right to be there as any of them. I do so want to spend a little of the summer under those lovely old trees that my grandpa planted. If I could once get there, they would not dare turn me away." So we managed it that

she should have her wish, and started her off—to sit under the beautiful trees of her childhood. But for a short time only, in the course of a month, her gentle spirit was called to the better land.

#### DIFFICULTIES OF THE WORK.

But soon we needed larger accommodations, and moved from Brooklyn to St. Ann's Avenue in the Bronx. Notwithstanding the work was so interesting, to sustain the Home was a great struggle—especially on account of nursing the sick—and the dread of falling into debt often hung like a pall over me. Sometimes I was told "You should get prominent women on your Board of Managers—wealthy women whose names are known, and you should get a banker for your treasurer." And often I sat till midnight writing letters to prominent people, but without success. All begged to be excused, pleading they had no time—some kindly sent a contribution. Mr. Percy Pyne, for instance, enclosed in his letter, a check for one hundred dollars.

Another trouble confronted me. We found that the name, "Home-Hotel," was misleading, and we were advised to change it. This cost us eighty dollars for court fees, tho Mr. Coudert gave his services. The faithful ones, who worked with us, did all in their power, but many a time I kept my anxiety to myself for fear of discouraging them, and it was no small burden to carry the responsibility alone.

At one of our meetings, when I was rejoicing over the subscription of fifty dollars from a new member, one of the ladies rose and said—"Oh, if you intend to bring that person among us, I for one will drop out, for she is a woman with a history."

At another time a very prominent lady attacked me with—"You should be more careful as to the people you take into your home. I understand that you have old Mr. S. I heard of him years ago. He left his good wife and little children to starve while he spent his substance in riotous living. What if he has been a genius, and given his quota of art to the world! He was a decidedly bad man."

I reflected a moment, I had heard of this man's past, and finally I answered, "But what of the Good Samaritan. He didn't want to know the character of the man that fell among thieves—that same man, for all we know, may have been leaving his wife, or he may have been fleeing from justice for robbing his village. However, the Good Samaritan pitied him. Does anyone vote that this man be turned away?" I asked. There was a dead silence.

Years afterwards, an old lady had a Christmas tree in her room sent in by her grandchildren, and she invited everyone in the home to come and see it and partake of the candies that were provided.

In the dusk of the evening, when all had departed, the old lady saw this old man steal in and stand before the little Christmas tree, while the tears rolled down his withered cheeks.

Who can tell what memories of past years came up before him, of wife and children and home, as he gazed upon that little memento of bygone days. And I remember another who was said to have had a history, who used to say, "Pardon me for being late to breakfast. I have such wretched nights, I cannot sleep."

## THE KICKS OF THE UNGRATEFUL.

Certainly it often happened that those who received the most from us were the least appreciative, while those who received so very little were the most grateful, and during the vista of years, have always sent us their small annual contribution from their meager earnings. I was mentioning this to an old gentleman one day, when he said, "Ah, yes, but never get discouraged. I have received more kicks for the kind things that I have done than I ever did for the unkind."

Often I was confronted with the pitiful condition of old people who, for some reason or other, could not harmonize with son-in-law or daughter-in-law, although they were not without means—it seemed that no one wanted them. Several times we took charge of such a one, for what they could afford to pay.

Often there were two sides to the story.

Once a young man said, "My old grandmother is such a terrible crank that I can't burden my young wife with her. She would wear her life out—and mine too."

We received the old lady. She came very unwillingly. Her son brought her, but she was angry and would not kiss him good-bye.

In the morning I found her crying in the parlor, and one of the old gentlemen seemed concerned about her, and asked what she was crying about, saying, "Are you ill, madam?"

"Ill?" she answered, snappishly, "I've had enough to make me ill, I have lost my son."

"When did he die?"

"He didn't die; he was stolen from me."

"Indeed? Who stole him?"

"A chit of a girl came between him and me, and my heart is broken. I've been such a good Mother to him. I did everything for him. I denied myself to buy him things. When he was a little fellow, I bought him a hobby horse and a goat carriage, and this is my reward, after all that I've done for him."

"But why did you do this?"

"Why did I? Why shouldn't I? Couldn't I do as I liked with my own child, and my own money? It was the greatest pleasure in life to me, and he was always so fond of me, till he married that horrid girl, and brought her home, and expects me to take second place. And I won't do it. Just think of it! He'll sit at his supper and say to her, 'These biscuits are splendid, dear,' right before me—when her cooking isn't fit to eat. And he'll say he enjoys it! What an insult to me! And one day she said, 'One of us must go. I can't live with you any longer,' and I only found fault when I saw fit—but he's fool enough to seem so happy with her, and loves her as much as he used to love me. Yes, after all these years, this is my reward."

"But, perhaps, madam, you have had a good reward for all you have done for your son. Let us go back to the hobby horse and the goat carriage. You said it gave you great pleasure to see him enjoy them, and it made you very happy, so that all that you spent was repaid you a hundredfold. The memory of it can live with you as long as you live and yet you deny him the satisfaction of a wife and a home. I think, madam, that you are a most selfish and ungrateful mother." And he left the room.

Well, I remember that when some one referred to the poem, "Over the Hill to the Poorhouse," a young lady

remarked, "I do believe that old woman was so disagreeable that none of her children could live with her."

One of the faithful managers of St. Luke's Home once said to me: "It is a pleasure to take care of most of the old ladies in our Home, but, of course, there are exceptions. One dear old lady is constantly annoyed by her next-door neighbor, who insists upon going to her room, and won't give her any rest. The troublesome one suspects that we will call her to account when our committee meets, and she always contrives to be out on that day.

Such old people are like children, but we can punish children, and we can't punish the old people.

Applicants began to press upon us, and we took the lease of a house at Fordham, to accommodate the overflow.

It was at this time that Mrs. M. Fay Peirce, our Vice-President, was much interested in the rescue of the Poe Cottage in Fordham, and gave interesting readings from the poet's works. Of her admirable work we shall speak hereafter.

#### THE WONDERFUL CLOCK.

Among the peculiar people who drifted to our Home about this time was a lady who owned a remarkable clock. The maker of it had devoted many years to its construction, with the hope that some Cathedral on the American continent would purchase it. But the opportunity did not offer itself, and it became an elephant on his hands.

Mrs. B. was the widow of a well-to-do business man, a master mason, and she had many good friends among

the Freemasons. Her husband left her a nice little fortune, and they advised her to invest it carefully under their direction, so that it should bring her in a comfortable living for the rest of her lifetime. But Mrs. B. had a strong spirit for speculation, and she put her money into this big clock.

She imagined that she had found a big bonanza, and that she would be able to dispose of it to great advantage. Her idea was that Congress would purchase it for the Capitol. But Washington did not want it, and she soon began to feel the pressure of poverty.

The clock was on exhibition for a time, and when that was over she was puzzled to know what to do with it. It was of such an immense height that very few places could accommodate it.

However, Mr. Joseph Lester, whose place was on Broadway opposite Clinton Place, took pity on the clock, and gave it house-room. It was there that I saw it.

Certainly it was a wonderful clock. It not only told the times and the seasons, but the figures of the twelve apostles came out to greet you while it chimed the hours.

But it did not sell. However, Mrs. B. was not a woman to give up hope, for this clock was said to be surpassed only by that famous one at the Strassburg Cathedral.

She now looked around for some one to make her a loan on the clock, and finally found a lady who was (like herself) very optimistic in regard to speculations, and being delighted with the clock she loaned her a large sum upon it, at a high rate of interest. Mrs. B. now began to travel about, visiting prominent Freemasons in various cities with a view to getting an introduction to some Senator who would use his influence at Washing-

ton in getting them to purchase the clock. But finally her money was all gone, and she drifted into our Home.

She was not able to pay the interest on the mortgage of the clock, and the lady who loaned the money soon became desperate, for, like Mrs. B., she also had put her income into this venture. She came to see me to talk over the matter, and asked me what I thought of her investment, and what I thought she could do about it. Of course I could not give her any advice.

Also, a little gentleman called on me and told me that he was an old friend of Mrs. B. and had tried to help her. And that it was he who had taken in the money at the door when the clock was on exhibition, and that it had cost so much to transport it from one place to another, that it had eaten up all the profits of the exhibition, and that Mrs. B. hadn't enough money left to pay him the few dollars she had promised him for his services.

Mr. Lester had now moved up town, and the clock had to go into storage—having been taken apart on account of its immense size, and it was fast eating itself up in storage fees.

The Freemasons used every endeavor to urge Mrs. B. to go into the Freemasons' Home, but her restlessness would not allow of this, and she used to beg a few dollars from one mason and another to enable her to go about, still hoping to do something with her big clock.

On one of these occasions, she was away longer than usual, and when I inquired about her, no one could give me any information of her. So I never heard what became of the big clock.

## CHAPTER V.

In a few years, all the various professions had been represented in our Home. Some had sunk into oblivion and didn't wish their friends to know where they were. I learned how sharp and keen had been the struggle of life to the many. Also I saw that many had started out with bright prospects and the highest ideals, but their efforts had missed of achievement, and their lives had been failures—and yet, perhaps, not all failures, for often the output of a noble effort is more creditable than some successes, and it may be that for all we know their work may be counted as worthy a place among the immortals.

But some of our guests were cranks indeed. One old lady persisted in disturbing everyone in her part of the house at five o'clock in the morning by singing hymns in a high, shrill soprano. She had edited the first woman's magazine that had been published in this country, and was eighty years of age.

## A LEARNED BOTANIST.

An old lady—a teacher and writer, whose published work had made her known at home and abroad for twenty years—used to make a sojourn with us every now and then, whenever her purse strings drew her towards us. She was a remarkably fine classic scholar, was now quite aged, and had lost somewhat of her mental poise, which rendered her eccentric, egotistical, and overbearing. Her great delight was in giving lectures, especially in botany—her great and favorite subject. To give our household a lecture seemed to be her supreme desire, and I decided to gratify her if possible.

After considerable urging and persuading, I managed to get together an audience for the first lecture—there were to be three in all.

It was a very warm summer, and all felt that they were doing penance by spending the evening sitting under the bright chandeliers, while she exhibited her specimens and discoursed upon her favorite theme. The second lecture was not so well attended, and when it came to the third, the audience was sparse indeed. But her zeal never flagged, and, to the surprise of all, everyone who had attended was taxed with a bill of five dollars, and as no one had any money, we were given to understand that we were a set of ingrates who would be to her everlastingly indebted.

#### A REMARKABLE INTELLECT.

One sultry summer day, a peculiar-looking old lady presented herself at our door. She had come from Kentucky, had very little money, and had begged part of the way. She looked travel-worn indeed. An old bag was strapped over her shoulders. Her short skirt and cotton umbrella reminded me of pictures of Alpine climbers with their alpenstocks. I had heard of her literary work of a past generation, and had received some intelligent letters from her, but was unprepared to meet such a grotesque-looking figure. She hadn't been long with us when she began to write to prominent wealthy people, abusing them for not making such use of their means as she thought they should. Her letters were so attractive, as she gave a long history of her past life, that several of them brought responses to her appeals for help. One lady sent her tickets for an excursion to the seashore once a week, where a popular band played, and luncheon

was provided at the hotel. She went only once, then returned the tickets saying that the clubwomen did not give her proper recognition.

Another lady wrote her, "I think that we don't understand each other; come to my house to luncheon, and we will talk matters over." When she returned she said, "Such a spread for such a rich woman; she ought to be ashamed. Steak so tough I couldn't eat it."

"But then you haven't any teeth," I answered.

"Well, perhaps that was it," she said. "However, she asked me what I wanted her to do for me, and I told her that I wanted to have a little home of my own, and that if she could let me have a monthly allowance, I would take a little flat."

Now, this lady was going away for the summer, and she sent her a check for three months. But the old lady couldn't take care of money, and before the first month was out, the whole three months' stipend was gone. So she came back to us, much to my regret, for she demanded green vegetables for her breakfast, and was always late to her meals. But she was a remarkable old lady, and the accounts that she used to give of her interviews with people were truly interesting. Once a lady paid for her to spend a month at a country boarding place; she stayed a few days and then returned to write letters of condemnation to her patroness, and to the boarding house, which was not run according to her idea. Her next move was to pass the civil service examination, and so well was she equipped, that it was surprising in a woman of seventy-two years, and they gave her a place in the post-office at Washington.

For a while, all went well. But the spirit of antagonism returned, and her dictatorial aggressiveness and active pen began to attack those in high places, and she

was put out. For the first time, she showed some regret at her conduct. I told her that our Home had also come under the lash of her tongue, and that her ingratitude had surprised and hurt me. "Well," she said, "I am always doing these things, and then I am sorry afterwards."

## CHAPTER VI.

An old German professor—who had been the teacher of the wife of one of our ex-presidents, and who wrote me that she remembered him with a great deal of pleasure—invested his savings of forty years in a farm which in a short time proved an entire failure, and he came to us penniless. He was fifteen years in our Home.

### THE BROTHER AND SISTER.

A brother and sister had conducted a school in Brooklyn for many years. Finally, feeble health and the weight of eighty years forced them to give up the struggle. They passed sixteen happy years with us—the old professor living to be ninety-six. The sister is still with us in our Tenafly Home, has now been with us twenty-two years.

### THE PROTÉGÉE FROM ST. GEORGE'S.

At one time a singular case of jurisprudence came to our notice through the St. George's Society. A Miss S., an English lady, came from London with letters from well-known people, introducing her (as a teacher of drawing and painting) to the Vanderbilts and Astors and

other prominent families. For a long time she had a most prosperous career, and lived many years in a first-class boarding house, and apparently, like many others, lived up to her income and did not save anything for her old age. However, the widow lady who kept the house took a fancy to her, and promised to leave property to her. But she died without a will, and a son of the widow turned up. The lawyer who took charge of the case told Miss S. that it was now hopeless, as the son would claim his mother's estate. Miss S. was therefore thrown out of a home, and being without means applied to St. George's Society for a passage to London. While the arrangements were being made, the Society boarded her at our Home. Then she left for England.

Some six months after, there came a ring at our bell, and as I opened the door, to my great surprise, there stood Miss S. The lawyer had sent for her, telling her she had gained the case, and must come at once and claim her property. The judge had decided that as the son had neglected his mother, and had not come near her for many years, and turned up only when she died, that he didn't deserve her property, and there were many guests in the boarding house who were witnesses to the fact that she had promised to leave all that she possessed to Miss S., and so it was accorded to her.

Another case drifted into our Home through a party dying intestate. A lady took a little girl when only six weeks old, and brought her up as her own daughter. When she died, no will could be found, and a cousin came forward and claimed the property. The judge decided that as the widow had taken the child at such an early age, she was the same to her as a daughter, and he accorded her the property. However, the young lady provided for the cousin as long as she lived, and al-

though the latter professed great love and gratitude to her face, whenever she met her, behind her back she would vow vengeance, and threaten to open the case again, which she never did.

#### STAGE REMINISCENCES.

A Miss H., an aged English actress, drifted into our Home. "I'd rather not come to your table," she said, "let me make my cup of tea in my own room, and if you will allow me a dollar a week, it will get me all the food I want—all I've been used to have for years, and I cannot take any more." And this was true, she never exceeded the dollar, but I prevailed upon her to take Sunday's dinner with us, at which time she would entertain us with reminiscences of her early life. She was the only child of a well-to-do London merchant, but she had a burning desire to go on the stage. Mr. and Mrs. Charles Keene lived a few doors from them. It was impossible for a beginner to get on the London boards, but Mr. Keene gave her a note to a manager in Bath, saying "Give this girl a few lines and oblige, yours truly, Charles Keene." With this, Miss H. started off in high glee for Bath.

The first line assigned her was to say as she came on the stage, "My lord, here's a letter for you." The rehearsal went off all right, but when Miss H. found herself in front of a crowded house, with myriad eyes upon her, her tongue seemed tied, and all she could get out was, "My lul—lul—lul," but the actor quickly came to the rescue, and in a few loud words covered the breech, while she stole off to the dressing-room to cry herself sick. When the performance was over, a young actress came to her and said kindly, "Don't cry any more, I think

they will give you another trial. Tomorrow's Sunday, come and spend the day with me."

This young actress was Miss Braddon, the future novelist. She was what they called the utility woman at this theatre, because she could take so many different parts. Miss H. spent a pleasant day with her; she lived with her mother, her father was a gentleman who had offended his family by marrying beneath them; he had died or deserted them, his family did not recognize them, and Miss Braddon's earnings had to support them both. She saw her visitor looking at some parcels in brown paper, on a shelf over her bed, and said, "Those are manuscripts of books that I intend to write. I generally write a little every day as ideas come to me."

A daughter of Leigh Hunt was also in this company, and Miss H., who used to visit them afterwards, used to be surprised and amused to see such a moderate supply of food on the table for so many persons; it contrasted so strongly with the bountiful table in her own home.

In time, she found herself in London, and came in contact with Boucicault. When acting with him, he would insist upon dictating her costume, and demanding everything absolutely new, and the actresses looked upon him as a tyrant. Afterwards, she came with a company to New York, and acted with Lester Wallack.

When too old for the stage, she taught elocution to society girls, and wrote short stories of the stage. Then she fell sick, at which time the Actors' Fund took care of her, but she found it difficult to pay her way, although she had learned to live on so little. For many years she had impoverished herself by trying to hold on to the fine old furniture of her father's London house, and Mrs. Keene used to say to her, "My dear, your sticks will be your ruin." From time to time, the St. George's Society assisted her, until she came into our Home.

One day she said to me, "My wardrobe is worn out. If I had a few suitable dresses and twenty-five dollars to start with, I think I have a career before me, and would not any longer be a burden to your Home." Now for years it has been the custom of wealthy benevolent women to send their cast-off garments to St. Barnabas House, where they are sold to the poor for a mere bagatelle. Sometimes, a beautiful evening dress that has cost a hundred dollars or more is sold to an Italian woman for a dollar. I knew of this, and went there and selected a goodly supply of articles for Miss H., much to her delight, and with the twenty-five dollars she took up her abode at Asbury Park and spent the summer in reciting at the hotels and cottages, and made some friends. One of them engaged her to remain in their cottage and take care of their dogs until the next season.

The first winter was a long and severe one, and she suffered much from the cold. But she was brave and stood it out, thankful for a box of groceries and a bottle of wine that we occasionally sent her. I have met her in summer on the boardwalk in a pretty dress now wearing out that had once graced some lady at Newport or Lenox. She was fond of attending church, and in the latter days of her life was kindly cared for by the ladies of the Episcopal church at Asbury Park.

#### THE VIOLINIST.

Mentioning the clothing sold at St. Barnabas House, brings to my mind a little incident:

A young man had offended his family because he had no taste for business, his violin was his idol which he practiced with much zeal. There was something very refined and spirituelle about him, and he was retiring and rather reserved and timid at meeting strangers.

His mother, who was a widow, was very much like him. However, she did all she could to help him in his musical career. At one time his apparel was not fit to appear in the house of a wealthy lady who had engaged him to play at her evening party.

I gave his mother a note to the St. Barnabas House, and the modest little lady was delighted to be able to secure for a couple of dollars just what he needed, including an overcoat which he said made him imagine himself a millionaire every time he put it on.

#### **THE SEMI-INSANE.**

One of the most troublesome cases that we had to deal with was a young woman who had been a teacher in very good standing, and who was introduced to us as being in very poor health and in need of a rest.

She had evidently had a sort of upset through a love affair. She discovered that the young man was intemperate, and so gave him up. Also, a gentleman whom she seemed to respect very much, made her an offer, but he was a great deal older, and she could not make up her mind. He was very well-to-do, but she could not overlook the disparity of age, and yet she didn't want to give him up. This indecision had made her ill, and while she was in our Home she received notice of his death.

This had a disastrous effect upon her. Her temper became so violent at times, as to make her uncontrollable. Her egotism was extreme. She took intense dislikes to people in the Home, and they looked upon her as semi-insane.

"It's a mercy she never married," one of the old ladies used to say, "for there would have been the funeral of one of them right off." At times she would be tractable

and docile, and insist on helping me in various ways, but the assistance was always spoiled by her irritability. We were puzzled what to do with her.

She always talked of property that should come to her in White Plains; her father had owned, she said, the building belonging to the Eastern States Journal, and that her lawyer was fighting her case in the courts. It was her constant theme of conversation, and became her great obsession.

From the way she talked of it, it seemed impossible to doubt the truth of it. She was so sure of coming into possession of this property, that she made her will, so that in case of her death, this property would come to the Home. To meet the expense of drawing up this document, and also for other things she was in constant need of, she depended on me for a succession of loans. She went every week from Saturday to Monday to Mamaroneck, where she would call on her doctor. He did not charge her anything, but I had to furnish the money for her board, which was with an old friend of her family, who were not willing to entertain her without being paid for it. She had a married brother who didn't do anything for her, and so she remained with us year after year, always saying to me, "What you do for me will all come back to you; there is no doubt of it."

She was very fond of good clothes, and as the seasons came round would have violent fits of temper if she could not renew her wardrobe. Finally I found these loans too great a strain upon me; also I began to doubt the truth of her story. So one day I went to the court house in White Plains, and found her lawyer. When I made known my errand, he smiled and said, "My dear woman, it is all a fabrication; her mind is in ruins."

Not wanting to talk to her in person, I wrote a letter telling her I could not continue the loans, and put it under her door. To my surprise she met this matter in a strangely philosophical attitude. She assumed the air of an injured person, and became sarcastic. She applied for a position in a country school and obtained it. As soon as she was left to her own resources for money, she could wake up and earn her living. But her egotism was so extreme that it would not admit of a word of gratitude for the Home that had taken care of her so many years.

I have often felt that I deserved to be laughed at for placing credence in her story; I should have investigated it long before. But let us remember that peculiar case of the Humberts in Paris, where the wise heads of bankers and diplomats were for years deceived by a woman; and this instance is a sort of consolation to me.

## CHAPTER VII.

### A PHILANTHROPIST DECEIVED.

A gentleman asked us to receive into our Home a Miss V., an authoress. I knew the lady, I had read some of her books—she had made translations of the best foreign literature. She had submitted to him the manuscript of the first chapters of a work she was writing. He told me it was a marvel of cleverness—a poem in blank verse, and he believed nothing better had been written since “Paradise Lost.” He urged her to finish it by all means, and he would get it published, that there was a fortune in it. She told him her mind was too disturbed to allow her to write, as her means had run out,

and she couldn't pay her board. Hence, his appeal to us to take her free of charge, which we did. The book was to take her three months to finish. I gave her one of our best rooms. In less than a week, she came to me and said, "I can't write a line here; I must get back to my old environment, where I started the work, the inspiration won't come to me anywhere else."

Her former abode was a first-class boarding-house on Madison Avenue, where she had a top room at twelve dollars a week. As this was over twenty years ago, when boarding was not so high as now, this was an extravagant price for one in her circumstances. However, Mr. D. was so impressed with the merits of her work, and so anxious to see it completed, that when she said she could not do with less than two hundred and fifty dollars, he finally wrote the check, saying that he could ill afford to do so, and hoped it would soon be returned. She was one of three sisters in the South, and used to receive her portion of the income of the estate periodically, but she had no just value for money and was generally in debt. "Do look after her," Mr. D. said to me, "and hurry her up with that work."

In a month, I called upon her. "How much have you done?" I asked. She took out some manuscripts and said, "Oh, you mean the old poem, don't you? I haven't written a line of it—an idea came to me and I began a better one. Let me read it to you." It was a poem in verse, a sort of epic she said. It was beautifully written, its metre smooth and flowing and her command of language—always her strong point—was apparent throughout. But the subject matter was far-fetched and outlandish. An unhappy woman wished to expiate her sins by going to live alone in a desert, and her penitence was so sincere, and her prayers to the Deity so

eloquent and earnest that the wild beasts listened to her and never came near her. But the poem was not finished, so I never knew what became of this woman.

However, in four months, Mr. D. demanded the manuscript completed or his money. As neither was forthcoming, he seemed desperate, and determined to prosecute her. She pleaded her own case so eloquently and made her excuses so plausible, that the judge dismissed the case. This was evidently one of those cases where the mind had lost the power of continuous work, and would run off to something new.

A singular case presented itself, of an aged artist and sculptor, a protégé of Mr. D. Chester French, who said: "This man has been a genius in his time."

One day when I went to his room, I counted seven fine little sketches and begged him to finish one for me. "Oh, no," he answered, "I'll paint you something much better. Get me a canvas," mentioning a certain size. I sent for the canvas at once. It was in his room for years with only a background painted upon it, and never touched again.

#### A LESSON IN PRONUNCIATION.

An American gentleman who was an editor, lecturer, and humorist, used to drift into our Home whenever he was short of small change as he expressed it—and this happened very often. He was one of those who could be submerged for a time, and lost sight of, and then bubble up again apparently none the worse for his bath. Every now and then he would meet with what he called a streak of luck, when some one wanted him to give a lecture.

With a half-brother of the Rev. Henry Ward Beecher, he had travelled around the world—they had together published the first newspaper in China in the English language. They made good money, but our friend was extravagant, and Mr. Beecher dissolved company, I presume he had found it an unprofitable partnership.

Our lecturer now wound his way home to New York—calling at various seaport towns in foreign lands, where English and Americans resided, and he often had an opportunity to give one of his lectures upon China and other countries. He always preferred work to idleness, and he often did clerical work for me.

One evening, when he was writing out something for me, he said, "I have often been complimented on my oratory, on account of my good voice and my clear enunciation, and one night my pride received a terrible slap—a knock that I shall never forget. The audience was a large and fashionable one, and when I stepped down from the rostrum, several came around me to congratulate me on the success of the lecture, but one old gentleman called me aside and said with a twinkling in his eye, as he lowered his voice—"But, my dear sir, you made an awful slip-up when you were talking of the poor wretch who was hanged—you said 'gallows,' and the right pronunciation is 'gallus.' I felt awfully taken aback. I couldn't have felt worse if they had kicked me out of the town. I offered no protest, but went on shaking hands, though I would like to have had the floor open and swallow me up. That night, as soon as I got back to my hotel, I couldn't go to bed till I had hunted up a dictionary, and looked up the word gallows, and there to my dismay I found that the old gentleman with the twinkling eye—was right.

"I was asked to repeat the lecture, and I knew that this same old gentleman would be sitting in the front seat, anxious to hear what I would say when I came to that sentence about the gallows. But I was determined that he shouldn't have the satisfaction of triumphing over me, so when I came to that part of my story I used the word gibbet, and have stuck to that word ever since."

He confessed that his life had been a failure, because he could not control his appetite for stimulants. The last time he was with us (which was some three years ago) he had spent his last few dollars trying to organize a company for people to save a few dollars per week, so that when the next big national exhibition was given, they could each draw from the bank two hundred dollars to take them to it. This is as near as I remember the scheme. Some of the friends of his deceased wife helped him occasionally, and finally he started out with great expectations of the success of this new enterprise—The Exhibition Company. He was to be the president. "People smile when I present my plan to them," he said to me, "but I am sure it's a go."

However, he was now an old man, and getting feeble, and as I heard no more of him or this Exhibition company, we concluded that he had been called to another world.

I believe he was a perfectly honest man, and generous to a fault—when he had it, but he never could take care of money.

#### PATTI'S VIOLINIST.

Mr. Nichols, of the Brooklyn Bureau of Charities, asked me to take into our Home an old musician who had been a violinist in Patti's orchestra. He was over

ninety years old, and spoke very little English. He had married a young Italian woman who had supposed that he had money saved up. When she found he had nothing, she turned him out, and he lived a while by begging. He was a quiet, gentle old man, but had not been accustomed to the bath, which rendered him somewhat troublesome to us.

At that time Madame Patti was in New York, and I appealed to her to do something toward his support. Her secretary said that Madame Patti was supporting quite a colony of poor musicians in Wales, and that was all she could do.

However, Mrs. Ditson, the wife of the music publisher, called to see me. She said that her father-in-law had left seventy-five thousand dollars to be invested for the benefit of poor musicians, and out of this fund she contributed to our Home fifty dollars toward the support of the old violinist.

After a while the old gentleman became so very helpless that he needed hospital care, and our doctor thought it was best to place him in the Italian Hospital, where they could talk to him in his own language. But he was so unwilling to leave us, that nothing but the co-operation of the Italian priest could accomplish this.

"But he is so angry with me," said the priest, "that I am afraid he will not send for me when he is dying, and that will be so bad for his soul."

However, we got him into a better temper by telling him that perhaps he would get well and then he could return to us.

The good old priest had wonderful patience with this poor old man.

## CHAPTER VIII.

About this time two young medical students from the Flower Hospital asked to come to our Home. One of them was very pleasant and full of cheer, but everyone remarked how gloomy and moody his companion was, and one evening when it was very stormy, he was seen going out with quite a burden under his arm.

"What is that, that he is carrying?" asked some one who was looking out of the window. "Ah, that is his secret," said an old gentleman who had won the confidence of this morose-looking young man. "That is his trombone. He has to play that in the evening in order to pay Miss Fisher the four dollars a week for his board. That other merry fellow receives every month a nice little pink cheque from some lady-love, whether mother, sister or sweetheart, I do not know, but this is the secret of cheerfulness, and his merry moods."

In due time, these young men graduated and went their way. We saw no more of them.

One day, the old gentleman, who was their friend, showed us at the dinner table, the wedding cards of the merry young doctor, and leaning over to me, he whispered, "Just as I suspected, the lady's name is the same as that which used to appear on those little pink cheques that used to make him so happy."

## THE YOUNG PALMIST.

One of the curiosities of our Home was the son of an Episcopal clergyman who had been expelled from college. An older brother, who was the main bread-winner of the family, wouldn't have him at home, and he had

turned him out. His mother was in great distress about him, and she thought that perhaps I could find him something to do in our Home. I had known this lady for some time; she was the almoner of one of the Vanderbilts, who kept her supplied with the necessary means for various charities, and she always spent one day a week among the sick patients of the poorhouse on the Island, supplying them with delicacies and other necessities for their comfort. Sometimes she saw abuses which she exposed, and she often labored there under difficulties, but still she worked on, and gave faithful service in the good cause.

I saw how anxious she was about this son of hers; she said she believed that cigarettes had been his ruin, as they had dulled his brain, and prevented him from studying; so, although I expected very little helpful service from this young man, for her sake I decided to give him a trial. I fully expected to find this ne'er-do-well a lazy fellow.

But, to my surprise, he proved to be quite the contrary. He was wonderfully handy with various kinds of tools, and always anxious for something to do, and was very jolly and good-natured in offering help to any one. If he smoked cigarettes, he never did it when I could see him. When he could find nothing else to do, I sometimes found him entertaining some lonely sick old man by reading and talking to him.

I never saw him reading but one book, and this was a work on palmistry, and that would be when we were sitting together in the evening, some with sewing, reading, or card-playing.

He had a number of little papers or charts, and I asked him what they were, and when he showed them to me I found they were drawings of various hands. He

pointed out all the various lines, saying, "I suppose you know that no two hands are alike—just the same as no two feet are alike, the lines all tell something."

"Can you read palms?" said one of the ladies.

"Of course I can," he answered.

That evening he read several palms. The next morning at the breakfast table one of the guests whispered to me:

"There is something uncanny and very curious about that young man, Mr. Francis. He doesn't pretend to tell the future, but he does tell you things of your past life, which have long been forgotten, by some way or other he brings it all up to you. Of course I told him that it was all nonsense, and I laughed at it, but I could see that he firmly believed that he was telling me the truth. And so he was."

One evening, as we sat together, one of the guests, a woman of about sixty, said to him, "I wish you would read my palm; you see my hand is all full of lines, and wrinkles. What can you see there?" He leaned over it, and spent some time talking to her.

A few days after that she remarked to me: "When that young Francis was reading my hand, this is what he said to me: 'At one time you had some new friends who opened to you a new religion, which interested you at the time. They did not come to you by water; they came an overland route of three thousand miles.' I told him I had never been interested in any new religion, that I would have thought it a disgrace—that I had always been staunch to the faith of my forefathers. But he was very positive, and said, 'But you certainly did; I am sure of it.' I laughed and told him it was all nonsense, and bade him good night.

That was four days ago, and lately, only yesterday, there dawned upon me this remembrance. It must be forty years ago. I was boarding in the same house with two gentlemen, a father and son; the latter had come East to study law. He and I were often thrown together, and we became very intimate. I admired the young man very much; I liked him better than any other that I had met, there was so much that was frank and ingenuous in his nature, and he told me of his college life in Salt Lake city."

I fairly jumped, saying, "Oh, dear, you must have been among the Mormons."

"But didn't you know we were Mormons?" he asked. "I thought my father had told you; he boarded here before I came."

It was a great shock to me; I knew he had come from some part of the West, but I did not know where. I found that his father was one of the Mormon missionaries, that he had come to New York to meet a ship full of those deluded people whom they had gathered in various parts of Europe—mostly of the peasant class.

The young man said to me, "You see I have been born a Mormon, and I can tell you all about us." He told me how earnestly they were working to get Utah admitted as a state—that his father had three wives, that each wife had her own home, that his mother was the first wife and that the children of each wife took for their middle name the name of the mother. He gave me a copy of the Mormon Bible, called the book of Mormon, and explained that it had been written under curious inspiration; also he gave me the "Life of Joseph Smith," the first Mormon and martyr, who sacrificed his life during those massacres in Missouri when the Gentiles and the Mormons waged war upon each other.

Then they had a large book of Covenants, but, strange to say, he didn't seem to know anything of that terrible Mountain Meadow Massacre, which is a fact in our history. The Mormons had been very careful to keep this out of their records. "I never heard of it," he said. They published a paper which he received regularly and used to give it to me to read.

At last his father took his company on to Utah, leaving the son behind to pursue his legal studies. I saw him once after that, and that was to say good-bye to him. "I suppose you will some day be like your father with two or three wives," I remarked, and he answered, "It is my duty to take a second wife as soon as I can support another, and so on. It will depend entirely how many I can afford to support."

"I expect it doesn't cost very much to do that," I said, "for it is a pastoral country, and they all work."

"That was the last I saw of my Mormon friends. It is now some forty years ago, and they had gone so entirely out of my life, that it is not strange that I could not remember until some circumstances occurred to refresh my memory."

Sometimes we gave a fair for the benefit of the Home, and we found young Francis very useful. He was so active and willing to do anything to help us. He used to read palms, and he so amused some of the ladies that they would hire his services when they gave an evening party, and made his palm-reading part of the entertainment of the evening. For this he always received ten dollars, and sometimes more. He had the well-bred manner of the gentleman, was quite good-looking, always dressed neatly, and he always made friends.

This was when our Home was in St. Ann's Avenue, and the Presbyterians were building a church in our

neighborhood. The young minister used to come to us on Saturday, and spend over Sunday with us. At one time they gave a bazaar to raise a fund for the furnishing of the church, and many of us attended it.

Young Francis devoted much time in getting it ready. He furnished the booths and arranged things with very good taste; he fitted up an alcove bearing the sign "palms read, fifty cents."

The minister brought his young wife, whom we had never seen, and her sister, a delicate-looking young woman who expressed herself much pleased with the affair, and her sister said to her, "Now, Carrie, you must have your fortune told—come and have your palm read; every fifty cents is a help you know." And she brought her sister to Francis who was dressed up for the occasion in full Oriental style.

There was a good deal of laughing as the young lady gave her hand to the palmist, with her sister sitting beside her. "I am going to stay and hear what it is like," she said.

Now I was sitting at the door taking the money, and I could not hear what the palmist said, even if I had wished to do so. But he seemed to tell her quite a good deal.

Suddenly the young lady jumped up, tried to draw her hand away and said, "Oh, don't! That's enough, please stop."

I looked in to see what was the matter, and saw the elder woman with her arms thrown around the sister while she said, "Oh, Carrie, is that true? Were you there? Did you really do that?"

There was only a sob for the answer, as she led her sister away. The people were now beginning to crowd in. The minister's wife was soon absorbed by her many

friends, and when I looked for Miss Caroline I found her in a quiet corner looking very disconsolate.

"I am afraid you are not enjoying this very much," I said, "and you look cold, it is such a very severe frost tonight; perhaps you took a chill, let me get you a cup of something warm."

"Oh, no, it was not that," she whispered, "but that dreadful young man told so much about me that I didn't want my sister to know. If I could only have laughed it off, it would have been all right, she would have thought it nonsense, but you see I was so shocked—I was so unprepared to hear it, that I gave myself away. Now my sister will be asking me all sorts of questions."

This quite spoiled our evening, for I felt very sorry for the young lady, and I told Francis how much I regretted it. He opened his eyes wide, saying, "Well, that's just how it is, but in future I shall insist upon our being alone. But as they were sisters I thought it didn't matter."

#### A SHORT LIFE LINE.

I am giving these little facts for what they may be worth. Near our Home was the large handsome laboratory of Scheiffelin & Co., and one of the chemists, a young Scotchman, was one of our guests. He was a splendid specimen of young manhood, with a fine physique, and very bright and intelligent. He was a very jolly young fellow, and often amused us with his anecdotes and stories. Now Francis was always very glad of a new hand to examine, and one evening said to the Scotchman:

"What a strong paw that is of yours; let us take a look at it. The young man laughed, and held out his hand. Now Francis had a very impulsive, spontaneous

way of speaking when an idea occurred to him, he spoke out at once, without apparently giving himself any time to consider. He studied the lines of the hand that he held for a little while, then suddenly he burst out, "Oh, you can't make old bones, your life line is cut right short near the beginning." The young Scotchman laughed, and made some comical remark, which caused others to join in the laughter.

Then there was a game at whist, and no more was thought about it. Some three weeks after, the young chemist did not come down to breakfast on the Monday morning. As he was in the habit of spending Sunday out of town we supposed that he had gone straight from his train to the laboratory, but later in the day one of the chemists came to inquire about him, thinking that he was ill. They burst open the door of his room, and found him sitting on the bed—dead.

He had died of heart disease, while in the process of making his toilet.

The sudden death of the young chemist, and the circumstances connected with it, made a deep impression upon every one.

As we sat together in the evening, several made some reference to it. "That prediction of the palmist was wonderful," said one of them. An old gentleman whom they called the philosopher only smiled, "I see nothing wonderful in it," and turning round from the chess-board where he was playing, he continued, "It is very probable that the young chemist knew he had a weak heart; he may have been warned that he might drop off at any time. This may have been in his mind when he gave his hand to Francis, and it was simply a matter of mind-reading, no matter by what name you call it. Also in the case of that young lady at the fair. Her recent

experiences had made a marked impression upon her mind, and that also was a case of mental telegraphy or mind-reading."

#### THE WIDOW'S SON.

Now, in my opinion, the fact that Francis could delve down into the memory of that lady with her Mormon experience, is the most wonderful of all. Let me tell you a story which has lately occurred to me which bears upon this subject.

A widow lady had an only child, a bright, good-looking boy, and it was her greatest anxiety that he should have a good education and be worthy his father's name, but he could not learn his school lessons. Though intelligent in other respects, and not at all a lazy boy, he was always at the foot of his class. Even the multiplication table was a very uncertain quantity with him. Whatever he learned he seemed to forget five minutes afterwards. His mother worked over him unceasingly, and devoted all her spare time to him, going over every lesson with him. Toward the end of the school term the schoolmaster came to her with a suggestion.

"It seems to me that your boy Charlie could learn this poem, and recite it when we have our closing exercises. He has such a splendid voice, and such a clear enunciation, and he would make such a fine showing on our platform if only he could learn it."

The widow was so gratified with these words that she was tempted to say she thought Charlie might be able to recite the poem. He had just two weeks to learn it. Day after day she labored with him, offering him a reward if he succeeded and a punishment if he failed, but all to no purpose, Charlie could not learn the poem. If he got one verse right today, by the time he had learned

the next he had forgotten it. Finally, one night, in her agony of disappointment, she fell on her knees, and gave out a great cry, and sank weeping on the floor. The boy had never seen his mother cry before; it was a shock to him and he cried long and pitifully.

When his mother had spent her tears, she raised herself exhausted, and said, "Now go to bed." She went to her room, but it was late before she retired, and before she put out her light she went into the little room adjoining to see if Charlie was tucked up for the night. To her astonishment he was sitting on the bed half undressed, his eyes wide open, and throwing his arms around her he said, "Oh, mother, I know it all now, I can say every word of it." He repeated the poem without a mistake, and then pieces of history which he had tried to learn but had failed on, and rules in grammar, and portions of geography lessons, all poured from him now as though his pent-up memory was finding relief.

Now how would you explain that?

Elizabeth Bisland advances the idea that there are forces within and without us that we know not of, because our faculties are as yet too undeveloped to recognize them. Some are born with a keener mentality, more vital force than others, their receptive organs are more alive and alert. We are told that every event of our lives is engraved on the memory, that nothing is lost—it may be forgotten for years, but it is there. Think what a keen ear some little children have for music, while there are intelligent men with hearing so dull that they have never been able to whistle a tune.

As to the little boy, some force in the agonized pain of the mother met a receptive chord in the mind of the child and woke up the images in the storehouse of memory.

As the ages roll on, it is possible that there will be wonderful developments. What did we know of wireless some years ago? We have evidence that clairvoyance is a fact and not a fancy, and why should there not be clairaudience as well?

One of the guests, a lady who had been listening in silence now remarked—"This reminds me that we read in the life of Charlotte Bronte that she declared she once heard a voice come to her from a distance of many miles, and when one of her friends doubted the truth of it she said most earnestly, "but indeed it really did happen once."

"I quite believe it," said our philosopher.

#### A PRISONER'S FRIEND.

The Charity Organization Society asked us to take into our Home an old lady, as a gentleman whom they knew would guarantee fifteen dollars per month for her support. She had a quantity of white hair and we always called her Mrs. White.

She told me that her son was in prison. He had robbed his employer, who was a kind man; he had done a great deal for the youth, but it was not the first time that he had been dishonest, and while he thought best to have him convicted, he was willing to take care of his old mother, and it was he who was going to pay her board.

A very stylish-looking middle-aged lady used to come to see Mrs. White, and this she told me was Mrs. Molineux, whose son was also in prison.

At this time there was a celebrated poisoning case before the courts. Roland B. Molineux, who was tried for the murder of Mrs. Katharine Adams, was in Sing Sing. Mrs. White said that her boy and young Molineux had become great friends and that young White had asked

Mrs. Molineux to call at our Home to see his mother, and that Roland Molineux was writing a book about his prison life, which his mother would publish—that her son was the one who was writing the book, although young Molineux was giving him the incidents, and would call himself the author and would give him no credit for it.

Some of the guests complained that whenever Mrs. White visited in their rooms they missed some little article which was of value to them, and it occurred to me that she might be a kleptomaniac. One lady missed a silver keepsake and she worried considerably; and in order to recover it, if possible, I spoke privately to Mrs. White about this loss, inquiring, "Will you allow me to look in your trunk?"

"Certainly," she said very willingly, and immediately unlocked her trunk.

But what was my surprise to find that it contained over one hundred little parcels, all tied up so tightly and neatly, that it would have occupied too much of my time to search for the missing article. She saw how surprised I was at such a trunk full of tied-up articles. "I always keep my things like that," she said, with a little laugh. "You may open them all if you like."

But I knew it was impossible, so I did not attempt it, and had to give her the benefit of the doubt.

But the money for Mrs. White's support which was to come to us through the Charity Organization Society stopped coming. Dr. Divine, the secretary, wrote me that the gentleman had left New York and they did not know where to find him. Mrs. White seemed to regret this very much, and she told me that she had another son in the State of Maine, and she gave me his address. I wrote to him, and he arranged to come to take his mother home with him, which he did. But the loss of

the money which was now over one hundred dollars was a great disappointment, and it worried me.

Knowing that Mrs. White's benefactor was a very kind gentleman who would not wish me to lose the money he had promised for her support, I employed a collector to look him up, and after some delay the money came all right. The gentleman was surprised that the Charity Organization Society had not taken the trouble to get a letter forwarded to him. However, the money was considerably depleted by the collector's fee and travelling expenses.

We would suppose that a corporation like the Charity Organization Society, equipped with so many agents and clerks, would be able to do business on a better basis, for this was certainly a very slipshod affair.

## CHAPTER IX.

### A POLISH PHYSICIAN.

One of the most peculiar and troublesome of our old men was an aged Polish doctor, who, like many another, had worn out all his friends, and exhausted all his resources before he consented to go into a Home.

He had posed as a converted Jew, and for all we know may have been sincere in his change of religious faith. However, on account of his extreme poverty, he was glad to work them for all they were worth, one denomination after another, and each church claimed the credit of having converted the aged Hebrew to their particular belief. Each of them saw the necessity of getting him into some Home, which he obstinately refused to consider, and finally they all gave him up as a hopeless case.

His last venture was to interest a band of ladies who had formed a society of Spiritualists. According to his own story, one day, while taking a walk, he wandered into a hall to rest, and found himself at a Spiritualistic séance. The medium came to him, and told him that she was instructed to place a harp before him, which she did, and she ordered him to play something upon it. He told her that he had never played any instrument in his life. However, they told him to put his arms around the harp, which he did, and immediately the harp played the national airs of Poland, his native country. He was weak and tired, and hungry, and as the harp went on playing, he sat and wept. He told me that the music brought back to his mind the years of long ago, when he was the only child of well-to-do parents, who gave him every advantage in their power, sent him to two colleges, and afterward furnished him with money by which he travelled the world over, until it was nearly all gone, and then he settled down in the poor neighborhood of the Polish Jews, on the East side of New York City.

When these ladies saw the poor old man weeping, as he sat clinging to the harp, their kind hearts were touched, and they took him at once into their keeping. When they had investigated his story, they concluded that he had a claim upon our Home, and they came to see me about it. I went to see him; he was living in a rear building, in a little dark room where he was keeping house after a fashion of his own. His neighbors, who seemed to be almost as poor as himself, often took him in a portion of their slender dinner, and swept up his apartment for him. After considerable persuasion he consented to come to our Home.

About four o'clock one morning, I was suddenly

awakened out of my sleep by a loud rap on my door. Thinking the house might be on fire, I jumped up and went to the door. There stood one of the old ladies in nightgown and kerchief, a most disheveled appearance, with a frightful look on her face, saying:

"Oh, my dear, that old man you brought here last night has made an awful smell up on our floor, and lots of smoke comes from under his door. Something must be on fire in his room." I rushed up stairs. The old man was very deaf, but finally he heard a pounding on his door and let me in.

In a corner was an oil stove which he had smuggled in among his belongings. This stood on his washstand, and something he was frying on it seemed like some sort of fish and garlic, which gave out a most stifling and disagreeable odor, while one side of the wall was blackened with the smoke. "What does all this mean?" I asked, when I had blown out the stove and opened the window. "My dear Madam," he began with a very polite gesture, "it has always been my custom to get up and make my eatings at four o'clock in the morning. I cannot wait till your breakfast time."

"We must try and make some other arrangements," I said, and I thought everything would be all right when I gave him some milk and some crackers and cheese in a tin box for his four o'clock "eatings." But the next morning they awakened me again, saying there was such a strong odor of gas coming out of his room that they thought he had decided to commit suicide, and had asphyxiated himself. Expecting to find him stretched on his bed dead, I turned his key around with a pin, pushed it out on to the floor, and went in. He was sitting in his armchair contented enough, munching his crackers and cheese, and drinking his milk, which he had

heated over the gas, and had probably blown it out without knowing enough to turn it off.

We found it impossible to take care of him, and it was a puzzle what to do with him. It seemed too unkind to send him to the almshouse. He had spent some of the best years of his life among those very poor countrymen of his, attending their sick, and often receiving nothing in return but a bowl of soup, or a cup of coffee, because they had nothing more to give, and the neighbors had told me that he would get up in the middle of the night whenever they called upon him for his services as a physician, and we decided he deserved something better than the poorhouse. We therefore decided to send him to St. Johnland, which we could do for one hundred and fifty dollars per annum, so we paid the quarter's board in advance, and were glad to see him shipped off to that excellent institution.

Here he could not shut himself up in a room, for each old man has an alcove, and is constantly under the supervision of an attendant. But no sooner had the three months expired, than I received a letter informing me that the old doctor was sent back to us, and I had scarcely finished reading the letter when I saw him coming up the stoop with an attendant carrying his valise in one hand, and helping him along with the other. "What has been the trouble?" I asked, but the man only raised his eyebrows and was silent.

There was so much that was interesting in this poor old man that I made one more effort to provide him with a domicile, so I took a furnished room for him on the West Side among some poor people, paid his rent a week in advance, and gave him some money for his "eatings." But before the week was up the agent came to me and said, "You must take away your old man,

Madam, he shuffles around so early in the morning, and wakes people up, and we can't stand it."

My last effort was to place him in the Montefiore Home, sore against his will, and he remained there until he died.

## CHAPTER X.

### THE STUDENT OF COLUMBIA.

One day a lady in deep mourning called to see me. She seemed to have been in deep trouble, for her voice trembled as she tried to tell me her story. It appeared from the references which she brought me that her family were well-to-do people in a country town in the distant State of Iowa. After retiring one night, a happy wife and mother, she awoke the next morning to learn that her husband had committed suicide, having found himself bankrupt through some bad investments.

"Why did you not remain in Iowa where you were known and respected?" I asked. "The journey must have cost a great deal."

"My son had a burning desire to enter the School of Mines at Columbia, and I have an old friend who could help him to a scholarship," she answered, through her tears. "They have accepted his drawings which he sent in. But the question is, how are we going to live in the meantime? The smallest apartments are so expensive and our money is fast dwindling away."

"But you said you had a daughter. What is she doing?" I asked. "Ah! my daughter, she is studying to be a trained nurse. We both love the boy so much, we

would make any sacrifice to help him through. When we first came on to New York, I opened a boarding house, but I did not succeed. I have a dread of getting into debt, so I stored my furniture and took a small apartment. I heard of you at the Woman's Exchange. The lady there was very kind to me. She sold a quantity of my home-made pickles, and she told me that my pies were the most delicious they had ever eaten."

"And so you make pickles and pies?" said I, smiling, "but don't cry any more, that won't help you at all; let us get down to business. Don't keep your things in storage with such a poor prospect before you. It's the most miserable way of eating up money. Are you making pickles and pies now?"

"Oh, yes, but my stove is so small, that when I have an order for pies, I have to sit up all night, because I can bake only one at a time. I never let my piecrust touch bottom. I turn my plate upside down and cover the crust over it. It makes it like a shell, into which I put my fruit or mincemeat. I suppose you never made pies that way?"

"No, indeed," said I, "but it makes me hungry to hear you talk of it. However, my time is precious, and as I am always interested in young students, I will make you this offer. By crowding up a little, I can accommodate you with a couple of rooms where you can bring some of your furniture, and I will give you your board for such service as you may be able to render in my household work; I am often short of help, like most housekeepers of moderate means, but you must be willing to do as I do. There is nothing in house-work that I have not done since I started this Home a few years ago. I have lighted the kitchen range, and started the breakfast, I have scrubbed the kitchen floor,

I have washed at the washtub, and was as happy as any bride starting a new home."

"Oh! do let me help you!" cried the widow. "You will find that we have no false pride. Let me scrub your kitchen floor." "Well, no, not at present," I said, laughing, "but I shall get some paint, and you and your boy can paint the rooms which you are going to occupy, for one of them used to be occupied by an old Polish physician who used to get up at four o'clock in the morning and make what he called his 'eatings' over a little oil stove which he had smuggled in. I am now paying for him at St. Johnland, because he used to go to sleep and leave the stove smoking until the wall is as black as my shoe."

Before long, this happy mother and son were domiciled. I found their services very useful. When the daughter was off duty at the hospital, she helped me take care of the sick. The son helped to keep my books and he used to carry our funds to the treasurer, and the widow often did the cooking. He also went to Washington Market for me. He was a good caterer, and could make better bargains with the trades people than I could.

She was delighted with our spacious ovens, where she could bake her pies whenever she had an order. I gave her a high closet where she could hide away these tempting delicacies.

They remained with me until the boy got through Columbia. He is now at a mining camp out West, and I know from his letters that he has had to be pretty brave to endure the hardships of his career, but he knows he will soon be making a comfortable home for his widowed mother.

This youth is a nephew by marriage of a big banker who was imprisoned for embezzlement. He was liber-

ated upon the plea of four physicians who declared that he had only a very short time to live. After his release, he confessed that it cost him four millions of dollars to get free. Whether all this went to the doctors or part of it to some one higher up is a question.

I saw in the *Literary Digest* that he had regained his health, and was doing business as before. I wrote to him, asking for a contribution of ten dollars for our Home. He answered in a polite letter saying that he could not afford to do this.

#### THE WRITER OF "POEMS."

We were in the habit of giving two weeks' hospitality to as many as we could accommodate who could not afford to pay for it, and one day a middle-aged lady called and said she had heard about our Home at the Woman's Exchange, and that she was a writer who would be grateful for the change of air and environment, as it might afford her some inspiration on the volume of poems she was working on and getting ready for publication.

There was something very frank and pleasing in this little lady, although she impressed me as rather a simple-minded woman; but as two weeks was not a very long period, I thought we could afford to grant the same to this applicant.

She came the next day, and at once gave me some of her "poems" to read. She thought perhaps I might be kind enough to get them typewritten for her. I tried to wade through a few of the papers, but of all the simple stuff that I had ever seen with very poor rhyme and devoid of all reason, they certainly capped the climax.

Mother Goose riding on a broom-stick through the clouds was something that went ahead of them.

The following week her brother-in-law called on me. He said she had a mania for writing verse, which had two great disadvantages, as it took her time from the domestic work of the home, where he had a sick wife and several small children; also she was hoarding up her little income in order to publish her "poems," instead of putting her money into the family exchequer, and he was a Methodist minister on a small salary.

I told her I thought she was needed at home to supervise the housekeeping, as they could afford very little help, and she said, "I know it is hard for them, but you see it would be this way, just as I was washing the dishes, or making a pie, a sudden thought would come to me, and I would have to drop everything and go up to my room to write it out."

At last she went home, but in a few days she appeared with a worried look upon her face saying, "What do you suppose has happened, all my poems have been destroyed in a fire."

"Oh, dear, how did it happen?" I asked.

"It is the greatest mystery," she answered. "My brother-in-law said he went up one evening to the attic to smoke his cigar by the open window, and he thinks he must have put his lighted cigar on the box where my poems were. Some one wanted him down stairs, and when he came back the box was on fire and the poems were all destroyed. The mystery is that nothing else took fire, for the attic is full of all sorts of rubbish. You see, it is such a loss, for I can never write them over again, and there is nothing like them in the book-stores"—and she wiped away a tear. "It will always be a mystery how it was that the most valuable thing in the attic was the only thing that was destroyed."

But this mystery could have been solved very probably by her brother-in-law.

#### SOME ODD INCIDENTS.

A miserly old lady came to board at our Home, bringing with her a maid, a young woman who was a cripple, who didn't receive any wages, but was glad to have a home. Now, at this time we had with us an old journalist, who had been many years on the New York papers, and some of the Press people paid a low rate of board for him through the Charity Organization Society. The old lady became interested in him, and they spent their evenings together. No one else seemed to like him, for he was a most untidy-looking object, intemperate in his habits, and given to much boasting, and the telling of enormous falsehoods. However, the old lady took a flat, and they were married. Her relatives were furious, for they knew she would leave her property to him. She lived only a year afterward, leaving a will in which she bequeathed all to her husband. But it was found that her signature gave only her maiden name. The will had been drawn immediately after the marriage, and she had forgotten to sign her married name, so her will was null and void. This was a great gratification to her relatives.

The Charity Organization Society knew of the work that our Home was doing, for we often received a needy one whom their agents sent to us. I knew that this Society had social workers—ladies and gentlemen who gave their time to philanthropic work—and I asked Dr. Divine, the Secretary, to introduce to me two or three who would serve on our Board of Managers, and interest themselves in the work, and among the names

he gave me was one Dr. Henry Oppenheimer—said to be an eye-specialist. Dr. Divine said there was an old gentleman, a Dr. Wiener, who had some valuable land, and it was his intention to give a portion of it to some institution—and that he and Dr. Oppenheimer were intimate friends.

Dr. Wiener was a dear old gentleman of about eighty years, he had often sent us valuable books, and once when I said to him, "I wish you were better acquainted with our Home," he answered: "I know all about your Home, I am satisfied with it because it is non-sectarian."

I was now in hopes of our having a building for our Home. These new members were acquainted with Dr. Wiener, and I was very glad when he began to come to our meetings.

But Dr. Oppenheimer proved to be a most undesirable member, and it was through him that the Home lost the support of Dr. Wiener; for these two gentlemen could not work together. Dr. Oppenheimer was so aggressive and domineering, and so unwilling for us to receive any poor people into our Home, unless they had money at the back of them, that we refused to agree to his rules, for they were contrary to the spirit of our association. When he found that Dr. Wiener would not give the land, he and his friends resigned.

But he was not content with this, he circulated the report that he had left us because there was so much in the management of the Home that he disapproved of.

We were determined to have him face this accusation and tell what he knew, and for this purpose I went to Dr. Divine, and asked him to permit a committee of us to meet Dr. Oppenheimer at his (Dr. Divine's) office, at such time as Dr. Oppenheimer could be present. I felt

this was only just to us, since Dr. Divine had introduced this man to us.

The appointment was made and agreed to by Dr. Oppenheimer. We were all on time, and with Dr. Divine, sat waiting his coming.

But he never came. Dr. Divine 'phoned to him, but he answered back that he couldn't come, and must be excused.

We made another attempt to meet him at his house, but he would never show his face.

Dr. Wiener said, "I am ashamed of him."

## CHAPTER XI.

### THE TWO SISTERS.

One of the most comical characters that we ever had in our home was a young woman who had a mania for speculation. Wonderfully industrious and kind-hearted, she was always anxious to do good from her own peculiar point of view. She had a sister, and a brother who had been an Episcopal clergyman in Canada and was sent on a vacation to England by his congregation. Here he met a wealthy English lady whom he married. He had been in the habit of providing his sisters with twenty dollars per month each toward their support, expecting them to do something themselves to add to their maintenance. But their peculiar choice of occupation was always something antagonistic to any opportunity that offered itself for this purpose.

In the first place, they could not live together. Emma, the elder of the two, conceived the idea that she was like Joan d'Arc, and that she had an inspiration from

Heaven. But whereas patriotism inspired the French maid, it was theology that inspired this Miss Emma.

For nine years she had shut herself up in a little house by herself in Dedham, near Boston, to make a new exposition of the Scriptures, and to add to them what she considered was sadly missing. She found they did not balance. Three wise men who came from the East to worship the infant Christ must, she thought, be balanced by three wise women from the West. In Noah's ark they all went in pairs even to the smallest birds, because Noah, like herself, understood that all things should balance.

She found that the Deity was not perfect, there should be Father, Mother, Son and Daughter—that the Holy Spirit was feminine. But certainly this idea did not originate with her, for it had been floating around the world for ages. But that there was a fourth Deity seems to have been her own conception. She now came to New York intending to give lectures.

The two sisters took a flat together, but not being able to live in harmony they soon separated. Each took a flat, which absorbed nearly the whole of their slender income, and they were often in financial straits and behind with their rent.

Their brother continued to send the money regularly, but it came to them once in three months, and as a general thing, most of it would be used up by the end of the first month.

The younger sister, hearing that her brother's wife was a wealthy woman living in good style, was determined to go and make her acquaintance, and become one of her brother's family; this she thought she had a right to do, without waiting for an invitation.

Her brother's wife received her very kindly, although she was astonished to see her. But when her brother came home and found her there he was furiously angry, and told her to pack up at once and return to New York, or she would never have another dollar from him. She had spent all her money, and had nothing left to bring her back, but he soon bought her a ticket, and shipped her off. She was pleasing in appearance and being a lady to the manner born, she always managed to make friends where she could go to pay a visit.

The elder sister, Emma, had determined to follow her to England and claim the same right of living with their brother's family. But when she heard of the cold reception her sister had received, and how angry her brother was, she became too frightened to venture. When she was about to be ejected, she took a position in our home to be generally useful at ten dollars per month. She was very industrious, but was strongly impressed with the notion that she must uplift the ignorant, and I often found her after dinner, seated on the kitchen table, the help standing around her, while she expounded the Scripture, or some part of hygiene or the sin of eating animals, for she was a strict vegetarian.

At the end of three months she had thirty dollars, and to have so much money and not speculate with it was beyond Emma's control. So she gave me notice at once that she must leave me, and take a flat, as she intended to go into business. I inquired what business she intended to venture in. "Merchandise," she said, "I shall keep a store; you must come to see it."

## CHAPTER XII.

## EMMA'S ECCENTRICITIES.

One summer evening I went to see Emma. She was living in a newly opened section of the Bronx, had taken a flat on the ground floor, and in the window I saw the "Merchandise" offered for sale. There were footstools made of three tomato cans, and ingeniously upholstered, also pincushions made over fruit cans, but as she had so little money to purchase material, the cloth used was often a piece of bed-ticking on the footstools, and a piece of washed-out ribbon often graced the pincushions. She was full of hopeful smiles when she welcomed me, and I tried to reason with her, and show her that her wares were not attractive. "But they are so very cheap," she said. "I am giving all my time and charging only for the goods."

I went through her apartment; it was wretchedly bare. To me it was something pathetic. A young woman in the prime of her womanhood, well educated, who had been accustomed to the best in her parents' lifetime, now an object of the deepest pity.

There were the Indian swamis taking the city by storm, and the most intelligent people flocked to hear their views of theology, which were not half so interesting as much that fell from the lips of this young woman, but for the want of some agent to push her, she had no opportunity of being the fad of a day. But Emma was not unhappy; to practice austerities was one of the rules of her life, and she viewed with some satisfaction a poor little cot bed, her lame rocking chair, and her table made out of a board on top of a barrel which held her belongings.

"But what are those figures on the wall?" I asked.

"The illustrations of my allegory," she answered, with a smile. There were the three wise men from the East, and as Emma was not a very good artist, one could not help being reminded that man is fearfully and wonderfully made. Opposite them were the three wise women of the West. "One is your portrait," she said, "and the others are my sister and myself." Now as both the sisters were very good-looking women, I could not find fault with the caricature of myself that adorned the wall, and any one of us might have represented the Witch of Endor.

While here in this little flat, she took in an old lady who had been turned out by one of the tenants because she could no longer pay her board. Emma gave up her own little cot bed, and laid herself on the floor. She was always doing a kindness for some one. But finally the non-payment of rent stared her in the face again, and she and the old lady were turned into the street, and my portrait with others adorned the sidewalk, with the "merchandise" for company.

All the neighbors were sorry for Emma; they looked upon her as a lady a little bit crazy. They took charge of her few belongings, the janitor stored them away for her in his cellar, and again she came to me. Again she worked faithfully and well, but as soon as she had saved thirty dollars she was again seized with the desire to speculate with it.

She took a very nice flat on Fourth Avenue, paid down a deposit and spent nearly all her money in second-hand furniture to equip her rooms for taking lodgers, keeping the little kitchenette for herself. But as so many people let furnished rooms the applicants who

answered her ad in the paper did not find her place attractive.

One day a beggar woman with a baby in her arms rang her bell. She told a tale of woe, and Emma, believing the Lord had sent them to her, took her in and shared with her the best she had. But the baby was sick and cried in the night, and the tenants overhead complained that their rest was disturbed on account of it. The owner, who lived in the house opposite, came over in high dudgeon to investigate, and when he learned the facts, he said, "What does this mean? I thought you were a single woman living alone, and this beggar and her brat may give the house the smallpox, or the diphtheria. What is that horrid odor of oil? Where does it come from?" He looked around, and found in a corner a kerosene stove made out of three tomato cans. "Mercy upon us, you'll set the house on fire," he added.

The next thing I heard of Emma was that she and her lodger had been put out on the sidewalk, and the Charity Organization Society had been notified.

One of the agents of that Society came to me, for Emma always referred people to me when they wanted to know anything about her. I explained that the trouble was that she received her allowance from her brother every three months, and that she never could make it last. So that Society communicated with the Charity Organization of London, which arranged with the brother to send the money to them, and now the sisters receive their portion through this Society, and live each of them in one of those two-roomed apartments, and pay by the week.

Now that their income is doled out to them in such small installments, there is no longer the opportunity

for Emma to get into those terrible straits which she was always falling into.

When I called upon her I found her very happy, still working on her allegory. She considered that the thousand years of peace prophesied to us are now at hand, that Satan has been bound long enough, and will therefore be set free.

I could not understand exactly where he is expected to locate himself, but she is sure that he will not be able to trouble us any longer. Her work is a curiosity to anyone who could give their time to wade through it.

## CHAPTER XIII.

### SOME QUEER HELP.

Often I smile as I look back and recall some of my comical experiences with some of my help. As economy had to be studied to the letter, I often found it an advantage to employ out-of-work young men, as they were cheaper than women. The Y. M. C. A. often supplied me with a bookkeeper out of work, who was glad to have a comfortable home and small wages—seven dollars per month was the average pay. Of course, they were often very awkward, and made a sorry spectacle, and I had to be with them most of the time. For more than a year, I had a young man in the laundry doing all the coarse washing, and he learned to iron quite well. He had been in the real estate business. He kept up a correspondence with a former employer who came to see me and said, "I am so glad to find that he has overcome the drink habit; I shall take him back to my office again."

We had one very severe winter, and when I advertised for a useful man, there would be a line reaching half way down the block. Early one very bitter morning, the cook called to me saying, "I let the first two in, they seemed most perished. You ought to take that first one; he says he got up at four o'clock this morning and then walked a mile to look in the newspapers, and has walked from way down town. Now, I didn't like the look of this No. 1, and the honest face of No. 2 appealed so much to me. However, I permitted the cook's volubility to overcome my judgment, and I dismissed No. 2 with a cup of coffee, and took No. 1.

Later in the day, the cook shouted to me to come quick, that the new man was raising ructions in the kitchen and that he lived only round the corner.

Once a French-Canadian answered my "ad."—a neat, good-looking young man. I found that he had an aptitude for cooking, like many of the Latin race, and I taught him to make the bread. Very soon he was able to do the cooking. He made a fine looking "chef" in his white apparel. He was very reticent about himself, and I often wondered what he had been. One day, when he came to me for his wages, he noticed a book that I was reading entitled "Eastern Monasteries." He lingered a while, and I found that he knew considerable of monastic life. He told me that he knew of a monastery where the monks were all very old men, and that a young monk who went there found the diet so frugal that he didn't get enough to eat, and he ran away. I thought that perhaps he was that young man. "I am so glad that he ran away," I said. He was silent awhile, as if reflecting. Finally he said, as he shook his head mournfully, "But his soul will go to hell." He used to admire a pretty young nurse-maid on our block, and would follow her to

church. She left our neighborhood, and he became moody and more silent than ever. One day he came and gave me notice that he must leave. He had been with us over three years. Whether he followed the girl, or whether, like the escaped monk in "The Garden of Allah," he returned to the monastery to save his soul—we never heard.

#### THE MYSTERY IN THE NIGHT.

But once something occurred that was a source of great perplexity to me. Some one used to go round in the middle of the night and knock loudly on the doors of the sleepers. This was generally between two and four o'clock in the morning. We could think of no one who was an enemy to the Home intent on doing us such mischief. An old gentleman who was a spiritualist was sure it had supernatural agency. Finally, I sent to the Society for Psychological Research, and they soon solved the mystery. It was the last person in the world that I would have suspected—a dear old lady very much in need of a home. She had been sent to us by Mr. Hilton, the editor of the *Home Journal*; he had known her husband, who was an author. When left a widow, she had tried to support herself by keeping a lodging house, and it was an important part of her work to knock on the doors of milkmen and car conductors in the morning before daybreak. She was a somnambulist, and all our efforts failed to control her, and we were compelled to dismiss her.

### CHAPTER XIV.

#### SOME WORTHY SUFFERERS.

One of the saddest cases of poverty that came to my notice was that of an aged sculptor and his paralyzed

wife. It had happened to him, as it does to all in the profession, when no longer able to keep his social position, he was dropped out, and younger men filled his place although his work stood in the Central Park, and in the homes of the wealthy. He had sunk into poverty and oblivion from no fault of his own, nor anyone's fault apparently. Their neighbors, seeing their distress, notified a charitable society, and finally their agent paid their rent regularly to the landlord. A poor neighbor, living on charity, found that they often had nothing to eat all day, but two little potatoes. Then she spoke to her church people about it, and through their deaconess, we heard of them. As soon as the case was known, kind-hearted people responded to the call headed by one of our prominent American sculptors, and an entrance fee was raised for them, and they came to our Home.

How much they suffered in silence was apparent, for they had scarcely any belongings, nearly everything had been parted with, and although they made a neat appearance, we were shocked to find that during that cold winter, they had scarcely any underclothing. The wife was a charming little lady, and it was touching to see her husband's devoted attention to her as her nurse which he had been so many years. It was this that had taken so much of his attention and helped to break him down. Once she said to me, "Your Home is like a fairyland, sometimes I'm afraid I shall wake up and find it a dream."

One morning the mail brought me a letter with the following message: "Look back to some years ago, and you will remember Miss R.,—once a popular principal in one of the large public schools of New York. She is now in the Flatbush insane asylum—but she is not insane. She is there through some mistake. Go to see

her and judge for yourself." I went. Her handsome face bore traces of melancholy and suffering, but she greeted me with that gentle, amiable, cultured manner which had always been her charm.

"How did you come to be here?" I asked. "I don't know," she answered, "but surely I ought not to be in such a place as this."

I learned that she had been living all alone in a little flat, when suddenly her money seemed to have given out, and she was found sitting in a sort of dazed condition, without fire or food. Her landlady got a carriage and took her to Flatbush.

I felt sure that she was not mentally deranged, and after the necessary preliminaries, a day for her release was set, and I was allowed to bring her away to our Home.

I was curious to know how she came to resign her place in the school, where she held a good position so well assured, for I had inquired at the Board of Education, and was told that her record was excellent. So one day when she seemed stronger, I broached the subject to her.

She looked at me with her sad, melancholy eyes, and was silent awhile, finally she said, "Oh, my dear, I have closed the book, don't ask me to open it again—it is too sad."

But the world is small. I happened to mention her name to a family where I was visiting one day, and they remembered living next door to her for many years, when her family was in its prosperity. Her brother was one of the commissioners of the Board of Education, a bachelor well-to-do, and he lived at home with his mother and sisters. They lived handsomely in a house which they owned.

Anna was the youngest sister, and a born educator, a well read woman, of broad culture. She was a large woman, rather commanding in appearance, but with a very sweet face. Now, a handsome man, who called himself a broker, came into her life, and with what seemed the brightest prospects, they were married. They travelled about a great deal, he always seemed to have plenty of money. Finally, Anna was tired of so much journeying, and wanted to settle down at home, which he was reluctant to do. She began to wonder what his business could be, for he spent most of his time on steamboats and trains. At last her brother discovered that he was a professional gambler. Broken-hearted, for she was very fond of him, she left him at once, came home and resumed her maiden name, and never wanted to hear of him again. Her life was now a wreck, but her family sheltered her with loving care, and she buried herself in her books. The brother, who was the mainstay of the family, died suddenly. In a few years, the sisters followed, leaving Anna with the care of her invalid mother, a large, heavy woman, who required a capable nurse. The income began to shrink away, then the house had to be mortgaged, and finally it had to be sold under foreclosure. After her mother's death, she removed to Brooklyn and tried to support herself by teaching music, which failed of success.

Often she would take hold of me as she met me on the stairs and say, "I want you to know how much I appreciate what you have done for me."

And if our Home had done nothing more than to shelter this unfortunate woman—I should feel that it had not been founded in vain.

## THE OLD ARTIST.

J. Wells Champney, the artist, often interested himself in the needy whom he met with in his profession—sometimes it was one of his models, and he would write me, "I believe this to be a good girl, adrift in this big city; do what you can for her."

At one time it was an old artist who had been his teacher when he was a young man studying in Paris. His work had once been among the best, but now in his old age, his brain was affected, and his paintings were mere caricatures. He was most eccentric in his conduct. A gentleman allowed him his loft, which he made his studio, and where he lived in the most grotesque manner, clotted up with all kinds of curios—skulls and bones, each of which he said had a history. He was strictly temperate, but couldn't take care of money. What Mr. Wells Champney gave him for food, often went for some canvases or some brushes, and so the only thing to be done, was to arrange with a restaurant to provide him with two good meals a day. But no one restaurant would suit him for both these meals. To settle the matter, I had to arrange for his breakfast in Third Avenue, and for his dinner in Eighth Avenue—quite a distance apart. But his physique was strong, and he was a great walker.

As soon as we had a vacancy, we took him into our Home at Tenafly. Good Mrs. Champney raised some three hundred dollars as an entrance fee.

One morning he lighted some wood in his slop-jar, and went out to take a walk while his room got warm. Fortunately, the fire was discovered in time to save the house.

He had a religious mania, and used to walk miles to a particular church, carrying a heavy Bible and concordance strapped to his back like a knapsack, and return home late in the afternoon—always contented with the cold dinner left for him, provided he had sugar enough to put in his water. He said he had acquired this habit while living in France.

He persisted in arranging three stones where people would stumble over them to remind them of the Trinity. He soon cluttered up his room with all sorts of oddities, picked up in his long rambles. Sometimes I would say to him, "But I think this must have been stolen," and he would answer, "The Lord put it in my way."

Finally I told him I wanted him to come with me to talk about paintings to a gentleman, and in this way I got him to Bellevue to be examined for his sanity. I had to remain in the room while he was confronted with the charges that I had preferred against him. He owned up to all his antics, giving a religious reason for every one, putting in, now and then, a text of Scripture, and questioning the doctors as to their belief in a personal devil, very much to their amusement. They decided to keep him, and from there he was sent to the insane hospital on the island. But we kept track of him. When I went to see him, I said, "It's so nice for you to have a room to yourself." "But they always make you leave the door open," he answered, "and, beside, they don't put enough sugar in the puddings, and I can't get any hair dye to make my hair its natural color."

#### MOVING THE HOME.

About this time we received a legacy of one hundred dollars. A lady of very small means boarded with us for a while at four dollars per week. She seemed to be

very happy with us. But she became very ill, and her relatives took her away. After her death, I was much surprised when her brother wrote me that she had requested him to send us this amount.

The property on St. Ann's Avenue was to be sold, and we found it impossible to find a house large enough to accommodate us, so we had to take one on Grand Avenue at Fordham, and another at Crestwood. This division of housekeeping with its separate menage was expensive and more difficult to supervise, and the strain began to tell upon me. Finally Miss Laura Saunders found us a large house on Gramatan Avenue, Mt. Vernon, and by altering it to our purpose, we were able to make it our Home for the next eight years. But, the heavy rent, the improvements and the repairs were a drain upon our resources, and it was impossible to save anything toward a new building.

However, we made some new friends among the good people of Mt. Vernon, and Mrs. James Harcombe was our faithful Treasurer.

#### A DIAMOND WEDDING.

Those who can look back far enough, will be able to recall a wedding at St. Patrick's Cathedral, when the daughter of a prominent captain of the navy was married to a count who had immense wealth in sugar plantations in Cuba. This was long known and talked of as the "Diamond Wedding," for the tall, handsome bride was a blaze of diamonds—the wedding gift of her husband.

Upon the death of her husband she made an unfortunate marriage with a sort of adventurer, and this was her undoing. Her property in Cuba was many years in

litigation, and, finally, when the Cubans were released from the Spanish yoke, she went to Cuba expecting to work her immense sugar plantation herself, or sell the property. But failing to find a purchaser and not having the necessary money to pay for labor she was obliged to abandon the scheme and return to New York.

So, after years of hopeless waiting, she found herself penniless and friendless, except for one gentleman, a friend of her childhood, who was willing to provide for her under our care. She was with us two years; her misfortunes had unbalanced her mind. The malady grew worse and we could not keep her.

In 1899 our Tenafly Home was founded—an account of which is given in Chapter XXX.

## CHAPTER XVI.

### THE LOST FORTY DOLLARS.

Once I advertised for a young man to attend to two furnaces and do clerical work in return for his board and ten dollars per month, and a bookkeeper out of employment took the position. It was my custom every night to take my check-book and bag containing money and checks up to my room, and deposit them on a shelf in a closet.

One morning I started to bring them down to the office, but could find only the check-book. I concluded that I must have left my bag in the office over night, and went there in search of it, but nowhere could I find it. I was so vexed with myself for my carelessness, that I waited several days before speaking of it, thinking it would turn up. It was Christmas time, and my young

clerk had been showing us some pretty presents that he had bought for his girl cousins, some of them costing as much as two and three dollars apiece. I felt sure that he had picked up my bag with its forty dollars. I had stopped the checks at the bank, and I now sent for a detective and told him that I suspected the young man. After he had interviewed him in a private room, he came to me; settling himself comfortably in an easy chair, and stretching out his legs, he said: "Of course, that fellow took your bag. It doesn't take me long to size up that kind. He was very reticent about himself, didn't want to tell where he had been for the last few years; now if you say so, I will arrest him on suspicion."

But I didn't want to do that. After he was gone, the clerk came to me and said, "Don't send me away, let me stay on, and I'll forfeit my wages for four months so that you will be none the poorer for the loss of the forty dollars. I can see that you work hard to support this Home, and you have been kind to me."

I felt more convinced than ever that he had taken the bag. A friend who was stopping with me said, "You must send him off; it's not safe to have him in the house; we shall be losing more things." However, I sent for my nephew who lived near, and his advice was: "Don't send him away; it's no proof that he took your bag because he offered to make good your loss. There are so many others in the house, and you may have dropped it on the stairs. Any one may have picked it up. Don't send him away."

I followed his advice, the young man's work was so satisfactory, he was always ready to help in any way, and was so gentlemanly in his manner, and often worked overtime, that I didn't deprive him of his wages, but I

still suspected him, and it made me take a dislike to him, and I avoided him all I could.

When the spring opened, he obtained a better position. On leaving us he said: "I might be glad to take such a position another winter. I'd rather than live on the bounty of my cousins, and I should like to have a reference from you as my work was satisfactory, but I won't ask it."

However, I took his address.

Some time after, I had occasion to change my room, and in taking out my clothes from the closet, I found my bag; it had fallen behind the shelf, and was lodged between the wall and the clothes, which had hidden it from view. The discovery cost me no little worry, and not a few tears, for suspecting an honest young man. I wrote to him immediately enclosing ten dollars, which he promptly acknowledged with thanks, and said my letter was a great relief to his mind. Also I enclosed him a good reference. I informed the detective that for once he was mistaken.

This brings to my recollection another case of unwarranted suspicion. A poor charwoman came to our basement door looking for work. Our cook seemed to know her, they attended the same church, so I hired her to come by the day and help with our spring cleaning. She worked so well that I was anxious to keep her until the work was finished, and to make sure of her coming, I never gave her the whole of her day's pay.

One night, I found the cook up late looking for her pocketbook, which she had brought down to the kitchen to pay her insurance. Knowing her to be a forgetful woman, I joined her in the search. I hunted in every drawer, closet and crevice, but no sign of it. The next morning the charwoman didn't show up. As there was

five dollars coming to her, we felt sure that she had stolen the pocketbook. The cook wanted to have her arrested, but we didn't know her address, so she went to early mass every Sunday, hoping to get some track of her. But never saw her afterwards. One day, she was clearing out some tinware to throw away, and found her big, old pocketbook in an old saucepan with all her money—over fifty dollars—and her papers intact. We never heard of the poor charwoman.

#### A SAD SUICIDE.

One morning we detected the odor of gas coming from the room of an old artist; on bursting open the door, we found him reclining on his back, his arms crossed over his breast.

He was dead.

He left a letter saying, "My designs grace the Triumphal Arch at Washington Square, New York City. When ladies and gentlemen are admiring that Arch, little will they dream that the poor artist who made those designs was never paid one dollar for his work. The man who had the contract received a large sum, and then disappeared. It was the last public work of my life. The injustice and disappointment have preyed upon me, and I cannot shake it off."

His specialty had been painting children, especially boys—bootblacks and newsboys.

#### THE MELANCHOLY YOUNG MAN.

At one time when I advertised for a useful man, a young man answered who was an American of French descent. He had large, melancholy eyes and a sorrowful

expression, and the interview proved to be a comical sort of dialogue.

"What kind of work have you been accustomed to do?" I asked.

"I was never accustomed to do any kind of work."

"Then how did you earn your living?"

"I never earned my living."

"But how did you pay your board?"

"I never paid any board."

"Then you have an income to live upon?"

"I never had an income to live upon."

"Then some one took care of you," I said.

"Yes, I lived with my mother and sister."

"And did you not have anything to do?"

"I answered the door and sometimes went on an errand."

"Why did you answer my advertisement?"

"They told me I should have to find some work, because my brother-in-law died, and the home was broken up."

"Well, I will tell you, that if you come here to work for us you must be willing to do such things as sweep, clean windows, wash dishes, and set the table."

"But I have never done any of these things."

"Then it was no use for you to come here unless you are willing to learn to do this kind of work."

"I am willing to learn to do this kind of work."

"Now, there is one thing I must tell you, and that is this: I don't allow any man to go about in his shirt sleeves, our useful men have to wear what they call 'jumpers,' which they can change and put on clean every week."

"Oh, madame, a jumper, that would be impossible in my case, I should look like a mechanic, people might take me for a plumber."

"Then that settles the matter," I said. "I must get some one else."

He took up his hat, and looking at me with his sorrowful eyes he added, "Madame, I am very sorry but you see it would be impossible, good morning."

In the evening he called again and said, "I have come back—my sister says I must stay and wear a jumper."

The next morning I put him to work at the breakfast dishes; he was very slow but worked very neatly, and I told him he was doing very well.

"Yes, madame, but it makes me so unhappy," he said.

Of course I discovered that his mind was weak, and that was probably the reason why his family had taken care of him.

It often happened that some of the subscribers to the Home would ask me if I could recommend to them some honest person when they were short of help. And about this time a widow lady who had a very nice home in the country wrote to inquire if I knew of a man who would mow the lawn, and make himself generally useful about her place, and I thought this would be a pleasant place for this melancholy young man, and I suggested it to him. I knew he was perfectly honest, neat and respectable, and I was glad to oblige her, because she had been such a good friend to the Home.

"Oh, my dear madame, how could I think of such a thing?" he answered. "I was willing to be here with you because I felt that I was shut out from the world, that none of my former friends would see me in a jumper, but if I should go there, some of the people coming to see her might find me on the lawn in a jumper, and they would recognize me."

"But it will be so nice to earn such good money," I said.

"But I do not care for much money," he answered.

However, I persuaded him that this lady was an invalid, and lived very quietly, saw very little company, and that he might be there a whole year, or even a whole lifetime, without meeting any one who knew him.

"Well, I will go, madame, but you don't know how dreadful it is for me to wear a jumper."

Some years after that I met a lady who knew his family, and she told me that he did not live very long, and that it was death that finally released him of the jumper.

## CHAPTER XVII.

### UNSOILED HANDS.

There is always a large class of women looking for work, who don't want to soil their hands.

"Oh! I couldn't do anything menial!" How often my advice has been met with this response. "I never did menial work in my life."

And I would ask, "Did you never make a bed, or sweep a room, or cook a dinner, or wash dishes?"

"Oh! well, yes—in my own house, but I shouldn't like to do it anywhere else."

This always reminded me of that beautiful passage where the tired fishermen left their nets on the shore and came in obedience to the voice of the Christ, calling to them, and saying, "Come and eat," and they found a fire kindled, and coals thereon and fish cooking. Their Lord knew their need of this. His loving hands had made that fire and put on the coals and cooked the fish, and yet some Christian people pretend to be unable to soil their hands.

Some ladies in Boston, including the widow of Ole Bull the famous violinist, and one of the daughters of Longfellow, interested themselves in a widow who sold books for a living. She had been a journalist in her younger days. They raised a few hundred dollars and we received her into our Home. But she preferred living her own life and came very unwillingly.

Finding she had no appreciation for the Home offered her—always late to her meals and staying away for weeks together, we decided to return the entrance fee to the ladies and assign her room to one who needed it.

One other case gave us a great deal of trouble. The woman seemed to think that because we had taken her for life we were obliged to keep her, no matter what her conduct might be. When she had been with us two years we told her she must leave and offered her the three hundred dollars entrance fee which a lady had paid for her. But she refused to go, so we placed the money in the hands of a lawyer who finally relieved us of her.

We couldn't afford to waste our substance on lazy people who imagined that the world owed them a living. So we followed the example of Elbert Hubbard of the Roycrofters, when he found a gentleman tramp had lighted down upon him, and was not willing to go into his shop to work. He invited him to take a drive, and he then dropped him down at the station, with a railroad ticket to take him back where he came from.

I didn't do exactly that, but I used to put an advertisement in the papers, saying, that a woman would do light housework in return for a good home and small compensation. I always had many answers, and some very good ones among them. They never received more than five dollars per month, but often had little gifts which were more to them than money. Some of them I still hear from as time goes by.

**WHITTIER'S PROTÉGÉE.**

The aged poet Whittier was interested in a young lady and wrote me the following letter:

"Danvers, Mass., Sept. 9, 1890.

Dear Miss Fisher:

My young friend Miss —— has sent me the report of the Home for Destitute Authors and Artists.

It seems to me to be a most excellent institution. The thought of it on the part of the founder was an inspiration, and I think God will bless it. Miss —— is a lady of fine talents, and the sister of one of the most promising of our writers.

No one better deserves a home than she does. With hearty approval of the work, I am thy aged friend,

JOHN G. WHITTIER.

This young lady came to us, and I found her one of the most pleasing and interesting girls that I had ever known, but she was totally deaf, and this had debarred her from any office work where she might have earned a living. She was so bright and intelligent, that when you gave her half a sign she could guess the whole of what you wanted to tell her.

I soon learned to talk to her on my fingers, though we often did more laughing than talking, for she had a keen sense of humor.

But I saw that there were times when she felt sad and lonely. She had been born and brought up in Boston, and had never been away from it, she had many kind friends there and missed them very much.

One day she said to me, "I wonder if I ever shall be able to get anything to do."

"You are a perfect little housekeeper," I answered.

"I have a scheme for you, let me try it and see how it succeeds."

So I put an advertisement in the *Boston Transcript* and she was much pleased with some of the answers. And in a week's time she was comfortably domiciled in Boston which she so much loved, and where her friends could come and see her, for she had many in the Episcopal Church where she had been brought up.

In one of her bright, cheery letters she wrote, "My good hostess and I have a race every morning after breakfast to see who will get to the upstairs work first."

I still correspond with her, and will do so as long as we both live.

## CHAPTER XVIII.

### A CRIPPLE VS. POLITICIANS.

One of the most interesting ladies that came into our boarding department was Miss K——, a pioneer of the "League of the Baptized," an organization which is a woman's auxiliary to aid and augment the fund for the aged and retired clergy of the Episcopal Church.

She was in the prime of her womanhood, had met with a sad accident while leaving a trolley car, which kept her confined to her bed for some time, and made her a cripple for life. For two years the case had been in litigation, and was finally lost.

But she wanted to be occupied, and while an invalid in her room she thought out and planned this noble work.

Being a D. A. R., of an old American family, she was well-connected, and was able to secure Mrs. Seth Low as the Treasurer of the fund.

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The conditions of this league are that every Episcopalian should contribute ten cents per annum. Miss K—— sought to have a delegate in each church to collect the dues.

The work has gone quietly on, and has so far progressed that this small sum of ten cents has brought in a considerable amount.

But Miss K—— also took up another line of work. She had had the advantage of a superior education, had been sent to England in her girlhood, where she had made English History a special study, and as soon as she was able to move about with the aid of a cane, she was engaged by the Board of Education of New York City to lecture under the auspices of that body.

The subject she selected for her first lecture was Walter Raleigh, a special favorite of hers; this she arranged with stereoscopic views.

Now there were some politicians who had some influence in the Board of Education, who were opposed to her giving this lecture, and they so warned her to cut it down, and so restricted her as to what she should tell, that she was discouraged, and knew that the lecture would lose half its significance and beauty. However, she braced up, and went through with it.

I attended that lecture; as I sat there and watched this young woman, as she stood there describing so graphically the various scenes in that eventful and tragical life, I was deeply impressed with the injustice which is permitted in a great city like New York, where a body of ignorant and bigoted men can step in, and control a situation which is far above their intelligence and their understanding.

## CHAPTER XIX.

## A BELGIAN EDITOR.

One of the most troublesome guests we ever had to deal with was a little, old Belgian editor. By some means he had come into the notice of charitable people who saw that he ought to be in some Home. In the meantime they allowed him what he needed to pay the rent of his room and provide him with food. He liked this method much better than going into an institution, and did all he could to fight against it.

I presume his friends had become tired of helping him in his own way, and they placed him in the care of the Charity Organization Society, so that the help he received, although it still came from them, was given to him through that Society.

When it was arranged that he should come into our Home, I went to see him. I looked round the bare room and seeing no sign of a bed I asked, "But where do you sleep?"

He shuffled over to a closet, and opened the door. On the floor was an old comfortable. On this bed of his a large white cat was sleeping. I made some remark about the animal and he said, "That cat is a necessity, otherwise I could not sleep in this room, on account of the rats."

And yet he was so reluctant to leave this miserable shanty, and was very uncommunicative, but I knew that in the past he had been an interesting man, a great student, always making researches in scientific matters, and making translations.

He had probably come to this country for a wider field for his energies, and not meeting with the success that

he had hoped for, it had embittered his temper, so that at times he was almost morose.

However, true charity is no respecter of persons, and a man who had given the best of his lifetime to study and to literature as he had, deserved our attention. After raising every objection that he could think of, he refused to come unless he could bring with him the big white cat. So we consented to let him bring the animal among his belongings.

However, as we couldn't allow a cat in his bedroom, we had to find a home for it elsewhere. The old man never forgave me for this, and seemed determined to give us as much trouble as possible. As his sight was failing, we assigned him a room on the upper floor, because it had two good windows, and gave plenty of light; but our useful man had to carry his meals up to his room three times a day, because he wouldn't come down to the dining room. Often I have seen him walking around in the grounds, and when the dinner bell rang he would run into the house, and being very light on his feet, he would run up the long flight of stairs with the agility of a boy, determined to have the tray brought up to his room. He was like a child in many respects.

He declared it would kill him to take a bath, and we found it necessary every little while to send word to the Society how troublesome he was, and they would send one of their men to talk to him, and warn him that if he did not do better they would put him in the almshouse.

His principal diet was hard-boiled eggs and rice. He would pay no attention to the advice of the physician as to what his proper diet should be. He was with us nine years, but never once came down to his meals.

Finally, he died suddenly of acute indigestion, at the age of eighty-seven years.

**NON-SECTARIANISM.**

Our old professor had the happy faculty for making comments upon passing events, and sometimes very pointed and sharp ones—without giving offence to any one concerned.

One Sunday evening some one spoke of a sermon he had heard in the morning at a Universalist church, and several gave their preferences in regard to preachers and churches.

"What religion are you, sir?" asked our friend—turning to an aged sculptor.

The old gentleman was silent a while, then said—"Born Catholic—now nothing. My Mother was Catholic."

"Then you are certainly a Catholic," said a French lady, who was a very zealous Catholic, "you were born a Catholic and you will always be one by birth."

"But can a man be born a religion?" asked some one.

"Of course," answered the French lady.

"I should like to know what religion I was born," remarked our philosopher with the usual twinkle in his eye.

"Why, you were born Protestant, monsieur," said the lady.

"But I have not protested against anything, I shall have to answer like my friend here, born nothing—now nothing."

"But, madame, from which side of the house does a child get his religion—the father's or the mother's?" asked the philosopher.

"Why from the mother's side—Madame has proved this," answered some one.

"But, madame, suppose a child's father was a Catholic, and his mother a Hindu?"

Madame was silent a while, then responded, "In that case, of course, he would take his religion from his father."

Our professor tried to control himself, but he laughed heartily.

However, madame gave the old sculptor no rest now that she knew that he was "Born Catholic."

"I shall see that he goes to church and makes his duties," she said to me.

But she imposed upon herself no easy task, for whether it was high mass or low mass, he was never ready to accompany her. It was too hot or too cold, or his corns troubled him, and she became discouraged, as he was over eighty, and she was afraid that he would die without the rites of the church. She was very kind-hearted, and she made one more effort by bringing the priest to the Home.

But some one told him, "The father is down stairs, and is coming up to see you. Madame is bringing him."

He locked himself in the bathroom, and would not come out. Soon after he was taken ill and died.

Some mischievous person chalked on his door: "Born Catholic—Died Nothing."

At the German Catholic church in Mt. Vernon, there was for many years an aged priest named Father Albingher. He was very much beloved. As Mt. Vernon grew into a city, it was populous enough to call for other Catholic churches, and only the Germans of his neighborhood were left to support the church.

He lived a most austere life, wore old clothing, and

existed so frugally that he was supposed to be very poor. At last he became very feeble, and decided that he would go home to Germany to die. In a few months our French lady received a letter from him saying that he was not happy, that he would like to return to Mt. Vernon, and spend the remainder of his life in our Home—if we could accommodate him.

I answered the letter myself, telling him that we should be pleased to receive him. The letter was returned to me from Germany, with the word upon it, "Gestorben"—dead.

It was found that he was anything but a poor man. He had accumulated considerable money. I never heard who inherited it.

## CHAPTER XX.

### HALF-STARVED ARTISTS.

A young woman in a small New Jersey town wrote me that she was an artist, and in need of some help to tide her over the winter. I went to see her; I found her very well connected, a niece of Iraneus Prime of the *Observer*, one of the oldest New York periodicals. She told me she made screens for Altman's, but as she hadn't the necessary three dollars and a half to deposit for the satin, she could not get the work. She said she was in arrears for the rent of her room, and did not know where to go.

I called on Mr. Prime, and he said that he could not sympathize with her, because she was determined to stick to her artistic work at which she could not make a living, and as she could sew very nicely, he had ad-

vised her to become a dressmaker, which she had positively refused to do, and so he had left her to herself, and refused to help her.

The girl interested me. Her miniatures were excellent, and she painted birds and flowers very beautifully. I offered her an attic room in our Home, which she gladly accepted; we advanced the necessary deposit required by Altman for the satin, and she set to work at once to paint a screen.

It was interesting to watch her process. She drew her design on stiff brown paper, which she pinned to the floor, and then traced the drawing with white paint. Afterward, she fastened on to this the length of black satin, face downwards, and then took a flat iron and drew over it. When she lifted up the satin, she had all the design mapped out ready for the painting. This she tacked upon the wall of her room, and in less than a week the screen was finished, with its birds of paradise and tropical flowers, beautifully painted.

It was fatiguing standing up to paint the satin as it hung on the wall, and she was often obliged to lie down for a whole day to rest her weak back.

She had a beau, a young artist, evidently as poor as herself—the most grotesque and odd-looking figure that I ever saw in my life. He seemed to wear two pairs of trousers, the under ones being longer than those outside, and of a much lighter color. He wore a queer-looking hat much the worse for wear, and one day, as I saw him standing on our stoop, I said to myself, "What can be the matter with his coat?"

As I came nearer, I saw that at some unfortunate moment he must have sat down on his palette, while the paints on it were still wet, so that it gave something of the appearance of Joseph's coat of many colors.

One bright morning she said to me, "I am going out after breakfast with my friend, Mr. Jackson. Whenever he can spare fifty cents, he takes me to the Central Park for a holiday; he buys our luncheon as we go along, and we sit all day under the trees, sketching and talking about art."

"What does he paint?" I asked, and she said, "Landscapes and sheep; he is really a genius. But he gets discouraged, he has nowhere to exhibit his work, the art stores won't take them unless they are beautifully framed, and he has no money for that; so now he sells his little canvasses for a few dollars to some stationery stores, and they put them in their window marked three or four dollars, and when they sell they give him half; they always want such a big commission."

She worked all summer on the screens, Altman had a demand for all that she could paint. I once saw a letter that Mr. Sloan had written to her saying that he had seen her screens, and if she would make a design of full-blown roses, he would like to see it. The screens were sure money, and she continued to work on them until she had saved a nice little sum.

One day in the early Autumn she said, "I have found a room which I can make into a studio." I have some furniture in storage, and my old piano, and Mr. Jackson can sing very nicely; he has a tenor voice, and perhaps if he will cultivate it, he may be able to get a position in some church—the worst thing is, his clothes are so very bad."

"Yes," I said, "his clothes are very bad."

However, she took the empty room and moved her things into it. She did not need me any more, and as I had no time to visit her, I never heard any more of her, except that some friends told me her uncle, Mr.

Prime, was still angry with her, because she would not give up the painting and turn to something more practical.

But I have found many people of the artistic temperament who prefer to live their own half-starved life, following their own bent, rather than try a vocation that offered the prospect of a good income. And we ought not to blame them. That poor girl in the French boarding school who loved animals so much, and spent all her spare time drawing pictures of them, after many years devoted to painting, became the Rosa Bonheur of worldwide fame.

#### AN AGED FRENCH COUPLE.

I had once great expectations from an elderly lady who wished to place an old couple in our Home. They were French people, and nominally Roman Catholics, which debarred them from the Protestant homes. And as the Catholics do not build homes for the aged, as the Protestants and Hebrews do, there seemed to be no place for this old French couple, and their friend was much perplexed as to what to do with them.

This old Frenchman had been a ladies' shoemaker; he had made this lady's shoes for fifty years. He was a most exemplary and industrious man, and saved all he could for his old age. But his sight gave out. He could no longer work at the shoes, but he had a good son who kept a nice little home over the old couple. Finally, this good son died, and they were solely dependent upon what they had in the savings bank. They had one other son, a poor, ne'er-do-well, who was only a source of trouble and anxiety to them. But they couldn't turn him out. Their good benefactress did not know for some time of their poverty and anxiety.

Then something terrible happened to them. This son committed suicide. He left a letter and an insurance policy, sealed up and addressed to his father, saying, "My life was of no benefit to you and mother, but my death will be, for I have insured my life for you for one thousand dollars. This was the only thing I could do to help you."

The insurance company was very loath to pay this, and said it would be the last time that they would pay a suicide case. With this money, they looked round for a home. The lady appealed to the Charity Organization Society, of which she was a member, and they recommended our Home for the old couple, because it was non-sectarian, and the old gentleman would not be debarred on account of his blindness, as was the case with other institutions. So we received the old couple for six hundred dollars entrance fee.

#### THE BEQUEST THAT DIDN'T COME.

I knew that their benefactress was said to be worth many millions; she was a widow without children. I never heard of anything that she did for the old couple except to look for a home for them, and when we agreed to take them I hoped the least she might do would be to remember our Home in her will.

She was a very peculiar and blunt old lady, and according to her own appointment I used to call upon her when she was taking her luncheon, which always consisted of the same things—a baked potato, a baked apple, a cup of tea, a roll and butter. On the table beside her was a brown paper bag—like a grocer's bag, with dollar bills in it, and occasionally she would give me a contribution out of it. "But my dear lady, we are so much in

want of a building," I said, "if you cannot do anything now, I hope you will remember us in your will."

"That depends on how you behave yourself," was her blunt reply.

Now she had an old butler named Joseph, a Frenchman, who had lived with her many years. He seemed to be a factotum, secretary, maid, everything, she couldn't bear to have him out of her sight. When she had a visitor, Joseph would walk up and down the hall outside her door, which would be left ajar, and every little while she would call out, "Joseph, Joseph, are you there? Don't go away."

One day when I called on her, Mrs. Russell Sage came to pay her a visit, and that lady said to me, "Because your Home is non-sectarian you will have the same trouble that I have had with the Woman's Hospital, you will have no church to help you, and I find that makes a great difference."

However, I succeeded in getting the old lady to promise a contribution of five hundred dollars toward building a wing at our Tenafly Home. Fortunately for me, Joseph, the butler, was a witness to this promise, or I never would have received it. As it was, there was considerable delay, and I finally went to Far Rockaway, where she was boarding that summer, in regard to it.

As usual, the faithful Joseph was walking up and down outside her door, keeping out all intruders, and keeping watch for her call. She was now keeping her bed. She was not in a very good humor; said she had no recollection of making such a promise. I told her that Joseph knew all about it, and she called out—"Joseph, Joseph! come here."

Joseph came in, looking very solemn, and stood respectfully with his hands behind him on one side of the

bed, while I sat on the other. She questioned Joseph very sharply as to what he knew of the matter. He told her very distinctly that she had promised this five hundred dollars.

"If I could only remember it," she said, "but I cannot."

"But I remember it all so distinctly," said Joseph.

It seemed rather a hopeless case, and I said, "I will not intrude any longer today. I will come some other time when you may feel better," and I got up to go.

"I don't forget that old couple that you were so kind to," said Joseph, and he took out of his pocket a fifty-dollar note which he handed to me.

"You needn't be in such a hurry," said his mistress. "If you come again that will be wasting the extra railroad fare. I'd better give it to you now. Joseph, get me my check-book," and she wrote me a check for the \$500.

In the Autumn she returned to her town house. Judge of my astonishment when I read one morning in the paper that Joseph was found dead. He had committed suicide by shooting himself. I knew some French people who were old friends of his. They told me how kind-hearted he was, but that he deplored the terrible monotony of his position with this old lady, and that he sometimes felt that he must fly away from it.

When the old lady died, and her will was probated we saw that she left two millions to the School of Theology at Princeton. Several institutions like our own were disappointed that they were not remembered.

## CHAPTER XXI.

## THE MONGOLIAN—WAS HE A HUMBUG?

During an equinoctial storm, a small, delicate-looking man came to our door. I was ill at the time, but my assistant received him. I had advertised for some one to help with bookkeeping and clerical work, and he had come in answer to it. He gave him name as Edward Melville.

They told me he was wet through to the skin, as he had no umbrella, and his low, summer shoes were wet through. Also he had a villainous cough like one in consumption. His card told us he was a missionary from the Island of Ceylon. I ordered him put to bed at once, and sent for our physician, who said that he was a very sick man, and advised his being sent to Bellevue Hospital. Here he was kindly cared for, and so far recovered that he was able to return to us, and do a little work.

In a couple of months he was ill again and could not leave his bed. Again the doctor ordered him to the hospital. That was late one night, and the following morning my assistant went to see him.

"I feel so confused," he kept saying. "I cannot collect my thoughts."

She concluded that he had taken a great deal of morphine, and told him she would come in the afternoon, when his mind was clearer. When she went again about five o'clock, they were carrying out his corpse.

All that he had brought with him was a very small satchel, which contained some railroad time-tables, and a photograph of a Mongolian lady, and a young lady who looked very much like the missionary. Looking on the

back of the photo, I saw it was taken in London, and I wrote at once to the photographer, and asked him to try and trace the whereabouts of this Mongolian lady.

In due time I received a letter from her. She was evidently a lady of education and culture. She told me that her husband had been unfortunate in investing all his own money, and other people's, and, although he had not done anything wrong, he was afraid of being imprisoned, if he remained in Ceylon, and so he travelled around the world to reach by a very circuitous route our city of New York.

I had told her, that as Mr. Melville was a missionary, we did not like him to be buried in Potter's Field; that I, and some other of the ladies of our association, had attended his funeral; that he had the services of the Episcopal Church, and that we buried him in a very pretty rural cemetery called Maple Grove on Long Island.

She thanked me for the care we had given to her husband. She said she was living, through the kindness of friends in a convent, in a secluded part of England, and she expressed the wish that we erect a monument to her husband's memory, putting these words:

EDWARD MELVILLE  
AGED 37 YEARS  
FROM THE ISLAND OF CEYLON.

Some time after that, a portly English gentleman paid us a visit. His card gave his address in London, but he said he was a tea merchant doing business on the Island of Ceylon, and that he knew this Mongolian who called himself Edward Melville—that he was married to a charming Mongolian lady, and had a lovely home and a pretty daughter.

"I never liked the man," he said, "he needed too much watching. Finally he got deeply into debt. Like all Mongolians, he was a great coward, and as soon as he found himself amenable to the law, his first thought was to run away.

"What brought me to New York is this: I am sorry to say that my only son is engaged to be married to this man's daughter. When her father proved to be such a scamp, my wife and I did all we could to persuade him to break it off. But what can you do when a fellow is twenty-eight years old, and his own master, and desperately in love with a good-looking girl?

"We heard that a rich American woman named Fisher employed him as a secretary, and we supposed he was receiving a good salary; however, he never sent any money home, so I was determined to make this port of New York as soon as I could, and try to hunt him up."

I showed the gentleman one of the reports of our Home, and explained to him how we had taken pity on this poor fugitive who was dying of consumption; also I showed him the letter of the widow requesting that he should have a monument over his grave.

He smiled and said, "Oh, that is nothing for a Mongolian to ask, for they are the greatest set of beggars in the world. If I gave him a grave-stone, I should put on it, here lies a Mongolian Humbug."

## CHAPTER XXII.

### A WOMAN INVENTOR.

Probably it has been very truly said that many of the useful articles belonging to our domestic economy have been invented by women. It was they who first

thought of the need, although they may not have been able to work out the mechanism to its present conditions. There came to us once a young woman who seemed to have an inventive mind—she had devoted years to the carrying out of various ideas that had presented themselves to her.

As soon as she had worked out an idea to her satisfaction, she would take out a caveat. Then the hardest part of her work began, and her very small income, which she should have kept for her personal needs, was all absorbed in travelling about trying to find a promoter who would put the article on the market.

Occasionally she sold to a toy manufacturer a caveat, and thought herself well paid when it brought her thirty dollars, which happened I think only once in the seven or eight years that I knew her; and that was for a little automatic toy representing some little animal that would run about the floor.

Like many others of an inventive mind, she was not very practical. Often she would be away for weeks, and even months at a time, and then come in as late as ten o'clock at night, travel-worn and weary, and exhausted for want of nourishment. I was often vexed with her at having to look up a corner and a bed for her, for she had no money to go elsewhere.

At one time she was much benefited by the following incident: The widow of a manufacturer looked her up, and told her that her husband had made a success from one of her caveats, and that it had always been on her conscience that he owed something to the inventor, and as he was now dead, his widow did it in his memory.

This check, whatever it was, was a wonderful boon to her.

At this time she was working out what she called

the wonderful invention of her life. It was one that would convert weight into power. I saw the caveat; it was the size and shape of a toast-rack, with the exception of innumerable small wires which crossed themselves in every direction. She spent much time and money taking it round to gentlemen who had the means of manufacturing it, if they so desired. This time she was two or three months away, and when she returned to us the widow's check had been all expended in a fruitless effort, for she found that there was what they called a dead centre which the machinery could not overcome—also she learned that the same thing had been thought of before.

However, she did not give it up, but said that it would lay in her mind for future consideration, and in the meantime she employed herself on a new invention which amused us very much.

One morning she came to me with a very bright expression on her fair face and said, "I suppose you know that the peasantry in Europe have often used a kind of peat for fuel because it is much cheaper than wood or coal. It is made of dried soil which is compact, and shaped into a kind of brick. Now I have discovered that our American soil with a little petroleum mixed with it, will make a very good substitute for peat. Come to my room and I will show it to you."

On entering her apartment, I saw over by the window a large flower pot filled with earth, from the centre of which a bright flame was emitted.

"There is a small quantity of kerosene mixed with the earth," she said, "and I am now going to work out the proportions. The earth costs nothing and the oil very little, so I believe, if it is properly manufactured, it will make a very cheap and desirable fuel."

Soon after this a relative in a distant State sent for her to come and claim her right of a small bequest, and it was a relief to us when she took her departure.

## CHAPTER XXIII.

## A CASE OF INSANITY.

One day a lady wrote to me—

“Dear Miss Fisher:

“Will you accommodate for a short time in your Home a young lady who comes to the city to look for a position? As she is a stranger in New York, it will be a sort of protection for her, and it will relieve my mind of some anxiety, for she is ‘so young and so fair,’ and not accustomed to city ways.

“She is not without funds, but has means sufficient to meet all her obligations. I knew her parents; she was an only child, and had every advantage that well-to-do people could give her. She seems bent on having a career.”

I found the young lady a very pleasing girl about twenty. Before she had been a month with me I saw how gifted she was in many ways. She wrote good sketches and stories, made her dresses and hats, and embroidered the most beautiful linens we had ever seen. These she hoped to dispose of at the big stores, and get orders for more. She worked day and night on them with great patience, was never idle a minute. When others played cards in the evening or read for their amusement, she would sit with her work diligently sewing.

But the stores did not want her work; they had a stock on hand, or they didn’t want to pay the price.

But she didn't seem at all discouraged and said, "I shall keep them to make presents to my friends. I don't need the money, but I thought I should like to be a business woman. I shall seek occupation in some other direction.

She watched the papers, and also advertised for a clerkship in an office, and came home one day to tell me she had secured a position in the office of a church paper. The salary was a fair one for a beginner, and she was delighted.

I knew the proprietor of this paper—one of the oldest church periodicals in New York.

"What kind of work will they give you to do?" I asked.

"I am to examine what comes in for the woman's page and children's column, make corrections, and pass them on to the next reader."

Before the week was out, I noticed that she did not go out as usual and I mentioned this to her. She raised her fair face to me and said with eyes filled with tears as she shook her head:

"I liked the work so much, but it was impossible for me to stay, and preserve my self-respect. Mr. —— is not a good man, so I hurried away from his flowers and his flattery. I am sure I was right."

"Of course you were," I said, but I was shocked. I had known that gentleman for many years.

The next day she came to me and said, "I shall now devote myself to the looking up of my brother and sister; they are somewhere in the city. First I shall look among the hotels, and if I don't find them there, I shall look among the apartment houses where you find the people's names at the door.

I missed her for two or three days and felt anxious

about her. Finally I wrote to her friend who had introduced her to me, and this was the answer I received:

"Dear Miss Fisher:

"That singular case of the young girl who was arrested must be this very girl. She called on some people in an apartment house and declared they were relatives of hers. She stayed all day and when night came she was so excited that they were obliged to have her arrested as a disturber of the peace, and she is now in safe keeping, but I want you to accommodate her and myself for a few days, while I put her things together, and pack her off to relatives, who have a right to take care of her."

In a few days a bright young man called and told me that he would try to persuade her to go home with him, for she was his young wife; he had known her from the time she was a little girl, that as a child she had strange delusions which afflicted her every few months. He had always been very fond of her, and hoped that when they were married he could make her happy. He entreated her most affectionately to return home with him. I thought she would surely be touched by his manner, for his distress was so genuine, although he strove to keep up, and manfully fight against it.

Finally her guardian came for her and said: "She has had her last chance—she is incurable. I believe some people are born insane, and she certainly is one of them. She must be taken care of for the rest of her lifetime."

I was glad to discover that she had never been to that church paper. They had never seen such a girl. I have heard from her occasionally through the intervening years. She writes beautiful, long letters, always ending

with what she calls her daily prayer—that I will take her back and let her live the rest of her lifetime in our Home.

#### CHAPTER XXIV.

One case always amuses me as I look back upon it.

A man, who was evidently a gentleman, asked us to take care of his wife while they were moving, as she was an invalid. He did not prove to be very honorable; he neglected to come to see her, and paid no attention to our letters. She was a charming little lady, very fond of her husband, and deeply grieved at his negligence.

"He is kind to me when I am with him," she said, "but when I am out of his sight, he forgets all about me. He has done this several times. If I were not as helpless as I am, I would go to him at once, and he would not have the heart to turn me away."

I found he was boarding in a stylish house in West 23rd Street. I knew there was only one thing to be done; I found a boarding house opposite to him, where they could accommodate the lady; I paid a deposit on her week's board, and, ordering a carriage, I placed her and her belongings in it, and took her to her new abode. I then left a note at her husband's boarding house, saying that he would find his wife in the house opposite.

Such cases put us to some expense, but it was the only course open to us.

#### HUSBANDS DE TROP.

Once a stylish-looking young lady called on me to ask if we could accommodate an old gentleman. He would give very little trouble, and she would like him to stay

all the winter. As we had a boarding department toward the support of our Home, I showed her one of our best rooms, but she said a very small apartment would be sufficient, as he was very simple in his tastes, and she selected the smallest and cheapest room that we could offer.

When she was leaving, she told me that this was her husband, that she was going on a round of visits, and didn't like to leave him at home with the servants in case he should get sick. She brought him the next day. As he got out of the carriage, I saw how very old and feeble he was, and no wonder, for he was between eighty and ninety years of age. He had a handsome and very kindly face, and often looked wistfully at her, and he seemed much moved when she hurriedly bade him goodbye.

"Did my wife tell you how often she was coming to see me?" he asked the next morning. But I had no answer to give him.

"I suppose she will write me very often," he added.

But she never wrote, except to send the check for his board, and then scrawled a few words saying, "I presume he is all right; give him my love."

Once their coachman came to see him.

"The 'missus' told me not to let any one know where he was. Poor old man. He made a big mistake marrying that 'ere girl. He was an old bachelor, about sixty-five—she was a doctor's daughter poor enough too—glad enough to get him. He lavished everything on her, and is awful fond of her, and he never let on to any one how bad she treated him. Sometimes he didn't see her the whole day. She has all the money she wants and that is all she cares for."

For the first week or two, he would often say, "I think

my wife will come today or tomorrow, and take me for a drive, because she promised to."

But she never came.

Poor old gentleman, he no longer took any interest in the newspaper, and it was plain to be seen that he was pining for his wife and his home, and the tears would often be in his eyes when he asked me if I had heard from her lately. Finally he lost his appetite, and had a low fever, and I sent for a physician whose name I had heard him mention. The old gentleman was surprised and delighted to see him.

When the doctor was leaving he said to me aside, "You tell that woman that she must take the old gentleman home, that I say he is a very sick man, and he won't live very long." She came in quite a hurry and seemed very angry.

"I don't see who could have told that doctor that he was here," she said. "You could have given him some quieting draught when you found him worrying, and that would have saved all this fuss."

As soon as he saw her his face brightened, and he held out his feeble arms imploringly. She kissed him hastily on the forehead, and began to pick up his few belongings, and I was very glad to see him drive off and know that he had the satisfaction of going to his home, which was a beautiful one in Larchmont. The house was quite a mansion which stood in a large park.

Some three weeks after I saw in the papers the death of this old gentleman.

At another time a similar case presented itself, although under different auspices.

"I take paying guests in the summer—many of them are friends of mine," said the lady whose husband was a very old man. "And it will be better for me to board

out Mr. R. for the season. It gives me and my daughter very nice pin-money for the rest of the year. We can always clear some seven hundred dollars by it."

The old gentleman came, but not very willingly; he was wonderfully hale and hearty for a man over eighty years of age. There was a great deal of coaxing and cajoling on the part of the wife and daughter, but with very little success, so far as making the old gentleman contented away from his home.

When he had been a month with us, he wrote them that he had given them a rest, and intended to come home. But they sent word that the house was full, every available room occupied, and there wasn't a corner for him, and that I was in nowise to let him come.

But he only smiled as he counted the change in his pocketbook, and found that he had fifty cents.

"By taking six trolleys I can get home to Stamford," he said, as he bade us good-bye, "and please send my trunk by express."

## CHAPTER XXV.

When our home in New York was in its beginning, Mrs. J. Hood Wright asked me to take a young girl who was very clever, but in poor health after an operation in the hospital. Mrs. Wright agreed to contribute a dollar per week, and thought we might find a few other ladies to do the same. She brought the young girl in her carriage, and before she went away she called me aside and said:

"Really that girl is wonderfully clever. Ask her to tell you about her pictures, she has a number that she can show you."

The next day I asked the girl about her work, and she brought me a book of the Pacific Railroad, giving beautiful views of places through which it passed.

"I sat on that boulder when I took that view," she said, indicating a point of rock in the Andes, "I had strange experiences there. Once the wind took my materials away. Once I slipped down the mountain, but caught myself on a twig; it was so strong that I could pull myself up with it. The company said that I was the best artist that they had ever had."

She looked me full in the face with those lovely dark eyes of hers. Rachael, of Bible story, could not have been more beautiful than this young Jewess, and although I doubted the truth of her story, I was deeply interested in her, and I asked her to tell me about herself.

"Where were you before you went to the Hood Wright Hospital?" I asked.

"With the Episcopal sisters in 17th Street," she answered. "I am the show patient of a noted physician. Whenever he has a rich patient to treat for scrofula, he sends for me, and I tell them what a splendid cure he made of me, and this gives them confidence in him, so that they consent to be operated upon. I had a letter from him yesterday, he said he is going to send his carriage for me today.

But this doctor did not come.

I noticed that in speaking of him she sometimes mentioned him as a young man just entering upon his career, and at other times he was an old man, a specialist, who took only scrofula patients.

I told her she reminded me of the skull of St. Peter, which they show in some of the churches in Catholic countries, and when you ask how could two or three churches have the same skull, you are told that one is

his skull when he was a young man, and the others when he was of maturer years.

One of the sisterhood where they had been taking care of her called to see her, being still interested in her.

"We were anxious to know where she went when she left our hospital," said the sister. "We liked the girl very much, but she is so dreadfully untruthful; she tells continually the most awful falsehoods; a perfectly good, moral girl otherwise we feel sure, but with this terrible vice." And the tears filled her eyes.

This was a young hospital sister who had lately entered the order—full of compassion and love for her work, and was grieved to think of this great sin in so young a girl. But she had yet to learn that it was not a vice, not a sin in this poor girl.

She had received so much morphine that her poor delicate brain was no longer responsible for its action. However, there is one thing that we have to give this girl credit for—she never spoke ill of any one. Her vivid imagination ran on the good side of things. She defamed no one; no word of malice ever left her lips, she exaggerated all kindness that any one had ever shown her.

The scrofula was in one foot, and she was soon obliged to go again to a hospital for treatment. She had a father living, who finally placed her in the Montefiore Home.

#### THE OLD PLAYWRIGHT.

I often had occasion to notice how wonderfully free from care are some who are entirely dependent upon others for their support. One old playwright introduced to us by the Actors' Fund had written many successful plays. He was always writing new plays, but of late had

lost the necessary brain power to do good work, owing he confessed to the use of stimulants. Sometimes he would show me a letter from some manager at a distance asking for a new play, but they were always returned to him. However, nothing troubled him, and he kept on writing, for he generally could find some one to beg or borrow paper and ink from, or the price of it.

We had two physicians who attended our Home, one allopathist, and the other of the homeopathic school. They were willing to volunteer their services, but we always preferred to pay a small fee. I found that the old playwright was going to both these physicians, and I said to him, "You mustn't do this; we can't afford to pay two doctors to attend to you; you must keep to one only." "But, my dear madame," he answered with his usual happy smile, "I am obliged to do this. I want to know what is the matter with me, and if they both tell me the same thing, I shall believe it, and I am waiting until they have both diagnosed my case; if they don't agree in their opinion, I shall turn my back forever on the medical profession."

## CHAPTER XXVI.

### A GIRL FROM THE WEST.

One day I received from the West the following letter:

"Dear Miss Fisher:

"I saw an account of your Home in a newspaper, and thought perhaps you could help me. I am sixteen years old, and strong and healthy, and I want to earn my living, but I don't want to be a servant. I should like to be in a store, but the town is two miles from here, and I

couldn't pay my board in the town, as they pay beginners only a dollar a week. My parents keep a sort of road-house. My mother expects me to wash dishes, and help cook and she doesn't pay me any wages, though she makes good money. She buys my clothes, but they are always of the cheap, old-fashioned style, and I am so unhappy."

I answered her letter, and advised her to help her mother as cheerfully as she could, and something might open up in the future, and hoped she would find some friend much nearer than I was.

In about a month, I received another letter from her in which she said:

"It was so kind of you to answer my letter, and if you don't mind, I shall tell you of a queer thing that happened to me. One hot day, when I was sitting crying on our porch, a nice-looking buggy drove up to our door, and a gentleman jumped out.

"He said, 'I was making a deposit in the bank in the town, and asked if they could tell me of a place where I could get a dinner in this locality, and they told me of your house. So if you could give me my rations, and a feed for my horse, and let me take a wash-up at your pump, I am willing to pay two dollars for it.'

"He wiped the perspiration from his forehead; he looked such a gentleman that I didn't like to have him wash at the pump, and wipe on the same towel with the common men, so I said, 'Wait a minute,' and I fixed my room with clean towels and soap, and put them in there with my father's foot-bath full of fresh cold water. While he was washing, I fixed up a little table for him apart from the other men. My mother looked angry at me, but I whispered, 'Two dollars,' and went away. I

know it is rude to stare at people while they are eating, but he seemed to want to talk. I said to him, 'My father's whole thought is to raise money to have a sheep ranch in Mexico. He says that any man can double his money every year there, on sheep.'

"Well, I doubt it, unless he had a very large number," he answered. "He would be sure to lose on a small quantity."

"I replied, 'He thinks I ought to help my mother with the dish-washing and cooking. I didn't mind it when I was fourteen, but now I'm sixteen, I do.'

"Your father ought to pay you some wages," he continued, "although now I come to think of it, I don't know but what he is right about your helping your mother. My little best friend helps her mother on Saturdays because she is not at school, but then her parents buy her beautiful dresses, and when I can get the time to take her to church, I tell you all the fellows look at us, and I expect we make a fine-looking couple."

"Is that your handwriting in that copybook?" he asked. "Yes, isn't it good? I never went to school after I was ten years old," I answered.

"It might be better. You begin all your letters at the bottom and give them a queer sort of twist, whereas you should begin at the top. My best little girl doesn't write an elegant hand, and I tell her that fine, beautiful handwriting is one of the lost arts, that any lady should be proud of. Learn to make the Greek E. It is best. I have a great respect for those Greek fellows, how they worked, and got nothing for it but a wreath of laurels, and often not even that."

"He took from his inside pocket a letter, and after reading it all over carefully, he handed it over to me saying, 'I don't mind your reading what she writes to me.'

We write quite often; she writes three letters to my one. I believe that women write when they have nothing to say, and the men only when they have something to say.'

"And so your name is Hagadorn," he continued.

"Yes, a horrid name," I answered.

"Don't kick at your name," he said. "When I went through the old cemetery on Staten Island, where the old Vanderbilts are buried, I found the name of Hagadorn as plentiful as blackberries on a bush. You don't mind being related to the Vanderbilts do you?"

"That made me laugh. I said I wished they could find me some nice work to do."

"Let me tell you something," he said. "If you will be guided by me, I can teach you a kind of work that will not be a trade, but a profession."

"I said I should like that very much. 'Perhaps you don't know,' he continued, 'but it is said that the professional people are the aristocracy of this country—the parson, the doctor, the lawyer, the actor, the artist, the teacher, the trained nurse. Have you read the life of that noble and wonderful woman, Florence Nightingale, who made nursing a profession?'

"I haven't read anything," I replied. "The library is in the town two miles off, and it takes me two hours to walk there and two hours back, and it tires me out. But I shouldn't like to nurse the sick."

"Neither should I. It can't be very pleasant to listen to the grunts and groans of people. I know when I am sick, I wish I were dead and out of it all. But this is work I think you would like. It requires strength, patience and industry. I have taught it to three young women who are delighted with it, and it brings them a respectable living. I won't tell you now which profes-

sion it belongs to, but if you succeed with your apprenticeship, I will tell you. Now do you want to learn?"

"I said I should be very thankful."

"But you must read good books," he added; "they are the best companions. I shall bring you some the next time I come this way, and I will bring you the tools for your work. You will find me a hard teacher—you may shed a few tears—sometimes—girls cry so easily; but stick to it, and you will be glad in the end. Your father can inquire about me at the bank if he wants to."

"He looked at me with those honest eyes of his, and before he went he talked awhile with my father.

"Oh! how I longed for the time to come when he would be here again with those tools that he talked about. At last the day came. He brought a small pasteboard, the same as you roll out pastry on. Little hardwood pegs were driven in all around it; he handed me a pair of plyers and said, 'You must draw out these little pegs, so perfectly straight that the hole will be left perfectly round, and the peg must not be bent. Now try it.' After a good deal of effort I got one out, but I made sorry work of it. Then he took one out, clean and nice as a new pin.

"When he and his horse had had their dinner, and he had settled for it, he took his leave.

"Week after week I worked away at the pegs. My arm used to ache up to the shoulder, and the dish-washing and the sweeping seemed easy work after that. However, I kept on. Sometimes he scolded me and it was hard to keep the tears out of my eyes, and once he rapped my knuckles with the plyers. Before he went away he said, 'Men don't make as patient teachers as the women do. I know a young lady who went to Germany to study the piano under one of those big masters, and he was so

cross that she cried more than half the time, but she came out all right in the end, and so will you.'

"I worked hard at those little pegs for four months, then he brought me a fresh board with a new row of little pegs round it. They had little pieces of lead in them like so many little eyes. This lead I was to pick out with the instrument he brought me. I spent six months at this work.

"Afterwards he gave me two books on anatomy, so that I might study the nerves of the whole head.

"My father sold some cattle and paid me some wages for the housework, and I have enough now to take me to New York to the Dental College where I can learn to become a full-fledged dentist. My friend, Mr. Sinclair, says I have made a splendid beginning."

This girl came to New York. I advised her to board at one of the homes for young girls, where she would be just a walk from the college and save carfare.

As soon as she got her diploma, she went back to the country, and opened an office of her own in one of the flourishing towns there. In her last letter to me she wrote:

"I would prefer to see the most delicate woman enter my office rather than a great big strong man, for the men are more nervous than the women, and make the most fuss at a little pain."

#### A MAN WITH A PAST.

One of the most disagreeable duties that I had to encounter was to go one day to the morgue to look over the dead bodies, to see if I could find that of an old lawyer who had died in the street from a fall, and nothing was found upon him to tell where he belonged. He

had been many years in the employ of the Custom House. He had been a man of means, had lived many years apart from his wife, now deceased, and in his old age had put his affairs in the hands of his children, who looked after him, and found boarding places for him which seldom suited him, and he was constantly changing from one place to another, which gave them considerable trouble, as they lived far away from him.

They thought our Home would be the very best place for him, as he would have a little care and attention if he felt sick. They did not come to see him, but wished him to be comfortable, and he could well afford to pay for it.

I soon found him to be one of the peculiar. He would not take his meals in the general dining-room—he said the old ladies near him insisted on handing him the dishes, and he didn't want their attention; he preferred to have a servant wait on him. As we had several houses connecting, I was able to accommodate him with the front basement of the adjoining house for his private use, which he used as dining and sitting room, and could be alone by himself.

About this time there came to us a woman as a sort of working housekeeper; she offered me her services in return for her husband's board. She was about forty; at first, there was something repellent about her, for her countenance was anything but prepossessing. She had a bad defect in her vision, but as she talked to me, I was better disposed to give her a trial.

She seemed very anxious to take good care of her husband who was about her own age, but looked sad and melancholy. She said it took all her efforts to keep him from sinking into despondency since he lost his grip on the business world. She wore very shabby clothes, but

kept him well dressed. Through her influence over him, she got him to do some book-keeping and accounts for me; he seemed quite indifferent as to any compensation for the same. I found her very industrious, remarkably neat and reliable. She was well informed upon many points in domestic economy, and often insisted on finding something to do, when I told her that she would better be resting herself. She was very cheerful, and had a strong sense of humor. She had received a good education, and I often wondered what her past had been, and whether her husband was the same sad, melancholy man when she married him; and, if he had sufficient at that time to support a wife, why did he marry such a plain-looking woman whose appearance had nothing to recommend her but her figure? She was tall, well proportioned, and those who seemed to know, said she would have satisfied the dream of a sculptor.

She was very jocular, and when I had time to listen she would tell me some amusing little incidents in her life.

"I always wanted us to live in a community," she said, "and I thought the Shakers at Lebanon would suit us splendidly, and I was determined to get there if possible. So by degrees I saved up the money, and we started off. We were there several months, but there were such funny things there going on, that it often made me laugh, and I was called before the council and warned that I must be more decorous, that I was too full of levity, and that it was against the laws and tenets of their faith. After that I tried to control myself, and I thought I behaved remarkably well. But, alas! in a little while we were turned out. You would have to be a mere machine to live among them."

As the work assigned her did not take in the house

where the old lawyer had his bedroom, there was no opportunity for some time for their meeting each other. But once, when he came in to see me—he often came to consult me about some little trifling thing—just as he was coming in at the door, she happened to be passing out. When the door had closed upon her he stood for a while in silence, and seemed trying to speak, but was too excited, and he trembled so that I got up and offered him a chair. He pushed me away, saying, "Where did you get that woman? Why do I find her here? If it wasn't for disgracing my family, I would expose her, and prosecute her as she deserves."

I was puzzled as I reflected upon the matter. Before I had come to any conclusion, she said one morning, "When you have a minute to spare, let me speak to you."

I thought she might have heard what the old gentleman had said, and that she would refer to it, but all she said was, "I have seen an ad. in the paper for an assistant in an institution. I know something of the place, that they pay well, and if I can get the position I can pay my husband's board somewhere near me." I wrote her a reference in regard to her work, but the superintendent came to see me and said, "I have heard that it would not be best to engage her, although she has many good qualities. As to the rest, the less said the better."

She left us with her melancholy husband, and I have not heard of them since.

It was a very windy morning when the old lawyer went out to take his usual walk, and when he was a few blocks away, a gentleman saw his hat blow off, and in trying to run after it, he fell down and struck his head on the curbstone, and was picked up dead. Toward evening it occurred to the gentleman that he had seen such an old gentleman on our street, and he wrote me about the accident.

I was not long identifying him at the morgue. His son, who lived many miles off, sent for the remains. It devolved upon me to go to the Coroner and claim the few belongings that were found in the pockets of the deceased—his watch, keys, etc., which I forwarded to his son.

To my astonishment I saw in the Coroner the doctor who was our family physician when I was a girl. I remember what great effort he had made to obtain this office, and how his patients had voted for him, because they saw how anxious he was to be elected.

"It isn't that I care so much for the post," he said, "but I want to show the city what a coroner ought to do, and what can be done."

And all who knew him best were confident of his honest intentions and integrity and the uprightness of his character, which was more than they could say of some of the present coroners.

However, he was defeated. The Jewish girls on our block used to say, "No wonder he didn't get in; I guess the people want a good-looking man and he is so awfully ugly he would frighten a corpse."

"And he's too out-spoken," said another. "When my dear mother died after such a long illness, the first thing he said to my father was 'Better for her, better for you.' He is too blunt to be a doctor."

They used to say that he wished very much to be married, but was determined to wait until he could find a girl with money, "and he never will do that," said one of the girls "because he is so ugly."

There was a very pretty young lady, an invalid, who lived opposite to us, and at certain hours of the day she could be seen sitting at a window, and looking out upon the street. The girls said she was in love with the doctor,

that she found him so entertaining, for he played the piano most divinely, was very well read, and could tell amusing stories of his travels in foreign countries, and that she did not find him at all bad-looking. She was a Gentile, but would have married him if her father would have permitted it. Her name was Pauline, and once when they joked him about her he remarked, "She loves me and I love her, and if I ever marry and have any children I will call my eldest child Paul if it's a boy, and Pauline if it's a girl."

A couple of years after he went to Germany and brought back a good-looking young wife.

I inquired after her; he invited me to call on them saying, "We have one child, I want you to see him. Paul is a fine fellow, and we are proud of him."

I laughed. "And so you gave him that Christian name?" I said, "I should have expected to hear Abraham, Isaac or Jacob. Was your wife willing?"

"I didn't ask her. Why should I?"

"Did she know about Miss Pauline, your patient, who used to watch for you at the window?"

"It was one of the first things that I told her—I knew she would hear of it, so I told her myself."

"And she is not jealous?"

"Certainly not. She is a sensible girl; she often goes out with a young friend of ours, and one day he said to me, "I feel very much honored, that you should trust your wife with me."

"You?" I answered, "I wouldn't trust you the length of my finger, but I can trust my wife. No, she is not jealous. A woman with a jealous disposition should never marry a doctor, for she may have plenty of opportunity, and she should make up her mind to this before hand, or there's no happiness for her."

## CHAPTER XXVII.

## THE DEADLY FEUD.

I thought best to make it one of the rules of our Home that all discussions upon religion and politics should be avoided that might tend to the discomfiture of any one of the guests. However, strange to say, only one quarrel occurred during all the years of our Home, but that one was disastrous indeed.

Two old gentlemen, each from old American families, men who had been loyal to the North all through the Civil War, and both college men, went out one day to cast their vote at the time of election for President. One was a Republican, the other a Democrat. So fierce was the conflict that they never spoke to each other again during the five years that they lived together under the same roof and ate at the same table—they never interchanged a word.

"What is the great difference of ze Republican and ze Democrat that make those two old gentlemans never talk together?" said an old German lady to me one day.

I answered, "I cannot tell you, Madame, for I do not know."

## A STRANGE CUSTOM.

From what nation or people do we Americans derive the custom of dressing up the dead?

This set me thinking when two old gentlemen died in our Home. One was an American lawyer; his son wrote to me, "You will find a new suit of clothing in my father's trunk. Please tell the undertaker to see that everything is done as it should be and send the bill to me."

The other old gentleman was an Englishman. His daughter wrote me, "Please have a new nightshirt put on the remains and forward them to me. We do not like the American custom of dressing a corpse in all their clothes. It does not look like peaceful sleep." I could not help contrasting the appearance of the remains of these two old gentlemen. The American wore his best dress suit with studs and cuff-buttons as though he were ready to rise up and go to a party, while the old Englishman appeared to be in a peaceful sleep. Where did we get this unreasonable custom of dressing up the dead?

AN UNKNOWN WOMAN.

One of our guests was a gentleman who had once been a man of means, and enjoyed a sufficient income to give him the advantages of the best cultured society, but reckless investments so depleted his fortune that he was finally reduced to three hundred dollars per annum, all that was left to him of his last venture in a ranch in the far South.

He read a great deal, but he craved something more to entertain him. He sorely missed the companionship he had been accustomed to, and would gladly have married again, but twenty-five dollars per month did not encourage him to think of this.

In looking round for diversion he sometimes found in the daily papers something that took his attention.

At one time there was a celebrated case before the public, and many letters to the editors appeared in regard to it. Among these letters there were several signed "J. M., Redbank, N. J." These letters were the best of a great many. It was evident that the writer had a clear and correct idea of justice. Some said that

such brilliant ideas must come from a man, a lawyer probably, long versed in jurisprudence. Our friend felt convinced that these splendid passages came from the pen of a woman, and he had a burning desire to find out the personality of this "J. M.," of Redbank, N. J.

"You'd better be careful or you may get left," one of our guests said to him. "When I was in the army we used to amuse ourselves with a sort of would-be correspondence with some fair one we met with through the papers. I had a number of letters from a would-be lady which amused me very much. When the war was over and we were coming home this "lady" proposed that I should meet her at her hotel. But I knew better; I knew if I went there I should probably meet a man who would laugh in my face. So I wrote a final letter saying that the correspondence had given me much pleasure, but we would have to discontinue it as I was engaged to be married."

However, nothing could deter our friend from making an effort to become acquainted with this interesting writer.

"Why don't you go down to Redbank and try to hunt her up through the post office, the hotels, and the boarding houses?" was the advice another gave him.

He raised his eyebrows and with that comical smile of his answered, "When I have paid my board and laundry, and the woman for mending my socks, and put a bit of silver into the plate at church, there isn't much balance out of twenty-five dollars to take me to Redbank to skirmish round after a woman that I might never find. No, a few sheets of paper and some postage stamps will have to do the work."

Through his indomitable perseverance, finally he possessed himself of the fact that "J. M.," of Redbank, was

a lady. This was a great satisfaction to him. They corresponded regularly once a week, taking up various subjects for discussion.

At one time it was "The Right of Way." In Europe it is the rule to "keep to the left," but in this country it is "keep to the right." The lady declared that it was most natural and reasonable to follow the term implied and keep to the right.

However, our friend, who had lived in Europe, and motored much in France, could show reason why the rule of "keep to the left" was the better one, and he explained how accidents were averted by this rule. His argument not only convinced but pleased the lady, who said that she was always so glad to learn.

At one time they took up the life of the first Napoleon. The lady had evidently become imbued with the history of Abbott, who makes the great soldier a humanitarian, who hated war and carnage, who wished to make conquests in order to benefit the countries conquered. Our friend preferred to agree with Sir Walter Scott and Carlyle, who saw in this man an overwhelming ambition that nothing could satisfy.

As neither would give in to the other, and they found that they were going round in a circle, they both agreed to drop the subject. But it had brought them to a more friendly intercourse, and our friend looked forward to something more than this. He ventured to send his photograph, and asked the favor of hers in return.

She returned his immediately, making no comments whatever about his request for hers. This was not very encouraging, but still he kept on hoping for better times. He had never been able to learn her name, or anything about her, except that she was "J. M." of Redbank, N. J. When he was becoming tired of history and science,

he inferred that it would give him great pleasure if they could take up a very popular romance that had been lately written by a popular author, in which a deserted wife could not make up her mind as to where her duty lay—whether to remain isolated from the world where her husband had left her, or accept the offer of her lover to go with him where there would be joy and happiness.

The conclusion of "J. M." of Redbank, was that the lady might not find joy and happiness in her new companionship, her memory might keep travelling back to former years, and it might be better for her to remain where she was, and learn to find peace which would take the place of the happiness she forfeited.

When he attempted to write in a more intimate vein, with the hope that they might one day become better acquainted, she gave him to understand that, although she was alone, she was not free, that if they continued to correspond, it must be on the same old conditions.

When some six or eight months had passed, she wrote that circumstances compelled her to leave Redbank, and that the correspondence must cease.

He now wrote that he would ask her for one last favor. And that was that they might meet—just once only, that he might see the lady whose letters had given him so much pleasure. She appointed a day when she would be entering the Central Park in New York from the East 72nd Street gate at ten o'clock in the morning, that she was tall, dressed in black, but would not be able to speak to him, as it would necessitate explanations to the companion who would accompany her.

Full of expectation our friend was there at the appointed time. Very few people came to the Park through that gate at that early hour, but finally a lady and gentleman came. The man was a tall, distinguished-

looking person. The lady was a handsome woman dressed in black, and the thin veil over her face did not disguise her features. But she never looked up, so our friend had no opportunity of catching her eye to have the satisfaction of knowing that she saw him. This was not very pleasing to him, as he considered himself very good-looking, and he had taken particular pains with his toilet on that morning.

#### A DISTINGUISHED GUEST.

One of our most interesting guests was Mr. Arthur Lumley—whose obituary notices have been in many of our daily papers, for he was well known to the press as a painter and illustrator. He was staff artist for *Leslie's Weekly* with the army of the Potomac during the Civil War. He wrote and illustrated for the *Illustrated London News*, the *Graphic* and *Fine Arts*. He was the founder of the Society of American Painters in Water Colors, and had been a frequent exhibitor at the Royal Academy of London. He was a personal friend of Mr. Thomas Nast, the cartoonist, with whom he had been a fellow student at the National Academy of Design. In his latter years, he was afflicted with impaired sight, being condemned for two years to a dark room and idleness—which to one of his active temperament was a great privation.

But he tried to be so cheerful under it. Every morning after breakfast he would come to me for an exchange of greeting, and I always appreciated the advantage of hearing his opinions of authors and their works, for he was widely read, and had travelled so extensively. Those in the Home who knew him best feel his loss. He died at the age of seventy-five. He was never married.

## CHAPTER XXVIII.

One of the saddest cases that has ever been known in the annals of the White Slave traffic is the following:

"Your nurse always looks so sad," said a visitor to me. "That is what several have remarked," I answered. "She is not so very young, and if it is a love affair, one would think she would have enough control of herself not to parade her doleful face in public. She should keep it for her private room."

"Well, it is a love affair," was the answer. I noticed that her eyes were filled with tears sometimes as she went mechanically about her work in my room.

One day I said to her, "Won't you tell me what makes you so sad? Sometimes it makes one feel better to tell one's sorrows to some one." She knelt down on the floor by my bedside, so as to whisper in my ear. "It is a great secret, but if I could not speak of it to some one, I often feel as though my heart would burst."

"I was nursing in one of our first families. The mother, a lovely lady, had pneumonia. The daughter, a bright and beautiful girl, used to insist upon relieving me at night. I was the night nurse, and we were thrown much together. The poor lady was very ill, her life despaired of, and they appreciated so much the way in which I treated the case, that after the lady recovered, they made me stay awhile and take a long rest.

"Miss —— took me to matinées with her. She was a very lively girl, and I saw her in all her bright beauty. One evening she said to me, 'Now, I'm determined to have some fun.' She dressed me in one of her beautiful, expensive, imported dresses, and soon I found myself in the midst of a most élite company.

"After supper there was a dance. Miss — took me up and down the long drawing room with her, saying we were the 'gold dust twins,' which created much merriment. The evening ended with a masquerade dance in which we all appeared in masques and dominos.

"When the daughter related the events of the evening to her mother at the breakfast table next day, which must have been at about 2 o'clock in the afternoon, her mother said that no newspaper account of any such thing had amused her so much in many a long day.

"Ah! she was such a bright and beautiful girl, that daughter! 'I must get away from here,' I said. 'So much recreation and inactivity will demoralize me. I shall pack up at once. It is high time I got back to work.'

"These good people soon got me a position among their friends. I was very happy in my new situation, but, judge of my horror, when one morning one of the household knocked at my door before breakfast, to show me a paragraph in the morning's paper, which told me that the beautiful girl whom I had learned to respect and love so dearly, had been kidnapped in the middle of the day, in broad daylight.

"In less than a week,' my employer said to me, 'We shall have to lose you. That poor mother is ill from weeping and worry, and as you have been her nurse before, you are the right one to take care of her now.'

"I couldn't hesitate, and was soon at the bedside of that sorrow-stricken mother. I saw a great change in both parents. They looked so worn and so much older, and no wonder, when we consider the terrible strain they had been under.

"'Of course, she has been kidnapped for a ransom,'

said the father, as he bent with loving care over the bed of his poor wife, 'and as we have heard nothing, it is evident that they couldn't see their way clear without discovery. They have probably killed the girl, and carried her body to some distant, far away place for hiding.' 'No, no,' cried the poor mother, 'my darling child would not die without finding an opportunity to communicate with the mother who loves her so dearly.'

"I have employed the best detective force in the whole State," said Mr. \_\_\_\_\_. "The brightest fellow of the lot believes that the wretches handed the girl over to the White Slave traffic, as the next best way of getting money. They are searching in every White Slave resort where they can get an entrée, which is no easy matter, for these places are sealed like a tomb, and kept so secret."

"It was a beautiful morning when the care-worn and loving husband and father leaned over his wife in bed and said, 'Now, darling mother, take your breakfast, and I have some news for you.' 'Oh, tell me now! Think how long it has been, and how wretched I have been. It is so cruel to keep this word from me.'

"Poor lady! In the early prime of her life, and yet worn almost to emaciation, so little nourishment could we get her to take.

"'I must get dressed and go to her now, my darling child.'

"So with cries of joy because she was going to see the daughter she loved so much, and moaning and weeping because she couldn't get dressed faster, she finally sank back on her pillows exhausted.

"Poor lady! It was no easy task to get her dressed for the journey. Everything was done that a loving husband could think of for her comfort, and tenderly

holding her in his arms, he bore her half asleep along the tedious journey, now and then stopping by the way to get her some warm refreshment, for the journey was long and the night was bitterly cold.

"It was morning when we reached our destination, where we were to take a train for the nearest town that led to the sanitarium, where the young girl had been taken by her heart-broken father.

"A stage belonging to the institution met us at the station, and led the way through a spacious park, and the auto bearing its sad occupants followed. Soon the loving husband was carrying his wife through the spacious corridors, superbly appointed with every luxury.

"They entered a spacious apartment, and throwing himself upon a couch, while he still held his wife in his arms, he talked to her while the friend who accompanied them was busy at the portmanteau that had been packed at her father's suggestion.

"Take one of her prettiest dresses which her mother loved to see her in, and the jewels which she will recognize as the ones she had given her. Take comb and brush, so that you can brush her hair all down one side of her face, which had better be kept covered."

"When all was ready, he said to his wife, 'Now, mother, dear, you must promise me once again to be brave and strong. Your poor child has lost her memory and will not know you.'

"'Oh! Yes, yes, she will,' sobbed the poor mother. 'She knows I loved her so dearly.'

"He pointed to a figure opposite them. It was that of a young girl who sat motionless, gazing into vacancy.

"With a strange, wild stare, the mother contemplated this strange spectacle. The dress, the jewels, the long beautiful tresses finally seemed to speak to her, and

clasping the girl around the neck, she swooned upon her bosom. But the girl never moved. It was evident that her mind was gone never to return.

"The family physician, who had accompanied them, now came forward and said, 'I have had a room prepared, and shall now take charge with your wife and nurse. The long strain that she had been under so long had been too much for her delicate brain, and I know what is coming. She will always be gentle and easy to take care of, but she will be melancholy—the saddest phase of insanity.'

"Early the next morning, I knocked at the door of the head physician, and on being told to enter, I stood before him with tears in my eyes, and in an unsteady voice, said, 'You must let me go. You see it is so much worse for me to be with that dear girl than it would be for any other nurse, because I knew her in all her brightness and beauty. My brain reels every time I look upon that strange collection of distorted nerves. I shall lose my mind if I cannot get out of here.'

"'We won't ask you to stay,' was the reply. 'I will settle with you at once. We have made that poor man go to bed. He kept up so bravely, but now he is a complete wreck. If he gets some sleep, it may save him, but I wish that it would be otherwise. You must remember that it is his wish that no information should be given to the public in reference to this sad case. The last thing he said to me, when his mind was clear, was, 'Anything but that, Doctor. Half the world might sympathize with me, but the other half would make it the favorite theme of their vulgar, idle gossip, and talk of my beloved child as stark mad—a raving maniac. If you care for me, spare me that. It is all I ask. I could stand anything but that.'

"Poor man. It is my earnest wish that the mother and daughter may soon die, and leave him a few years' freedom from this terrible burden of sorrow."

But where did they find her? Ah! that is the saddest part of all. She had been sold into the White Slave traffic of Chinatown. Crouched in a corner, clad in the garments of a Chinese woman, that unfortunate girl sat staring into vacancy. All one side of her face and neck was distorted, probably from the effort that she had made in her cries for help when the gag was put in her mouth. Her eyes bulged from her head, showing the tremendous agony with which she had passed into insanity.

Oh! Fathers and Mothers! Take care of your precious daughters. Remember that it was in broad daylight, on the broad highway, with people moving around, that this noble girl was snatched to a horrible death.

## CHAPTER XXIX.

### FINANCIAL HELP.

In 1911 we received a legacy from Mrs. Anna K. Weaver of Brooklyn of five hundred dollars.

In 1912 a legacy from Mrs. Evelyn S. Ridgeway of Brooklyn of one thousand dollars.

However, we had no money with which to build our Home.

Then the same generous giver who had purchased the land for us, Mrs. Seabury, came forward with the necessary funds.

Mrs. McClymonds of Morris Plains, N. J., contributed

two thousand dollars for the completion of the edifice and the grounds and the furnishings.

Dr. Woodruff, Mr. Speakman, and Mr. Hull assumed the responsibility of the building of the Home.

The following loans were cancelled, which aided very much in the furnishing—

Mrs. R. T. Auchmuty.....	\$500.00
Mrs. Henry K. Sheldon.....	500.00
Mr. Frederick G. Bourne.....	500.00

Also from Mrs. George Finck a fund in trust of \$2,501.28.

Rooms have been dedicated to

Mrs. Henry King Sheldon,  
Harriet Gilbert Bourne,  
Annie M. McClymonds,  
Mrs. Richard T. Auchmuty,  
Julia W. Latimer.

The entire cost of the building and grounds was \$40,000.00.

The Seabury memorial, a gift of Mrs. Seabury in memory of her husband, Gardner Thurston Seabury—an ideal Home indeed. It stands in a beautiful location—325 Highland Avenue, Mt. Vernon, N. Y.

In April, 1912, we moved into this new building.

This was the dream of my life realized.

Many years had passed since I paid that visit to England in my girlhood and saw just such a Home for governesses, and wished that we had one like it.

"All things come to those who wait."

Also we have the pleasing prospect of a legacy of ten thousand dollars which will come to this Home by the will of Miss Cornelia Taylor, upon the death of a lady who now receives the income from it.

The Association was reorganized with Mr. Speakman as President and a Board of Trustees from among the strongest people of Mt. Vernon. This has relieved me of my work in the Mt. Vernon Home, and I have been glad to resign from its Board, and devote myself to our Rural Home in Tenafly, N. J.

## CHAPTER XXX.

### REMINISCENCES—THE LAPIDARY.

One of our life-guests was an aged German chemist, who had apparently spent his lifetime and his patrimony in the endeavor to produce precious stones. As to what success he had met with he never told us.

As he preferred a rural locality we transferred him from our New York home to the one in Tenafly, New Jersey. He was possessed with the assurance that he could produce the opal by the action of the sun's rays upon certain chemicals placed in the soil. He was an object of curiosity to the old ladies in the home, who wondered what he wanted with so many queer-looking bottles in his room, and when he explained that they contained valuable chemicals that he used in his work, they were frightened to death thinking that he would blow the house up. So to relieve their minds we gave him a room in a cottage on the grounds where he could have his laboratory below, and his sleeping apartment above, so that should any explosion occur he would be the only sufferer.

He was a perfect gentleman in his manner and bearing, and always polite to the old ladies, who, while they looked upon him with a measure of distrust and awe, could not help feeling much respect for him, and they used to watch

to see him emerge from his domicile in the morning, and come across the lawn to his breakfast, satisfied to see that he had not blown himself to pieces in the night.

A notice came to him from his brother in Germany that the valuable library of his deceased father had been sold, and he left us to go home to receive his share of the property.

There are those who ridicule a man for spending his life on a theme that brings him no success, but later on another will take up the thought which will prove a crowning triumph.

In Bulwer Lytton's "The Last of the Barons," the poor old man who invented the steam engine met with abuse and persecution, and was believed to be plotting against the life of the King.

But later on, the steam engine became the motive power of the world. Perhaps some day another chemist may succeed in producing the opal.

#### A VICTIM OF MORPHINE.

Probably very few people know that morphine is the cause of many a false tale—the source of many a false report which has injured sometimes for life a good reputation.

Well I remember receiving into our Home a lady who had been cared for in the family of an artist; she was supposed to render some service in return for their hospitality, but her poor health soon rendered this impossible, and the neighbors, seeing that she was only a burden to the artist's wife, appealed to us to relieve them of her—which we did. She had been but a few weeks in our home when she began to circulate the most astounding reports of our ill-treatment of her.

When we confronted her with these falsehoods, she

denied every one of them, and our physician, Dr. Haring, who attended her, told us that she was a victim of the morphine habit, and not responsible for what she said.

But I know there are people who to this day believe her stories. Very few people will take the trouble to investigate for themselves, and give credence to such tales, and it often takes years to live such things down.

#### THE HEIR TO HALF A MILLION.

It is seldom indeed that an heir to half a million knocks at the door of an institution and asks for board and lodging.

However, one day, a young man in the early prime of his life applied to us for this accommodation. He was tall, straight, well proportioned, clean cut, scrupulously neat, and fashionably attired in the latest London style.

"I come here to economize," he explained. "It is a case of dire necessity, and you must do me the favor of sparing me the annoyance of becoming acquainted with any of the people here—I wish to live entirely alone. To protect me from coming in contact with them, I must ask the privilege of dining by myself, and in order to do this I will take my meals earlier than the rest, and please see that no one but the maid comes into the dining-room while I am there."

It was not possible to manage this matter exactly as he wished, but to come as near to it as we could, we gave him a little table to himself at the end of the dining-room, so that the guests would not have to pass by him as they moved in and out.

But of course there was the necessity of his being seen by them as he himself passed out.

This he always did with his head bent down, and his

eyes fixed on the floor. Also he preserved this attitude in passing through the hall, or along the side-walk, so that no one should catch his eye, and annoy him with a nod of recognition.

"I see you read French," I said to him once, for he ordered *Des Etats Unis*, which came to him regularly; he seemed to read no other newspaper.

"I have lived in France so much," he answered, "that I feel more at home there than in my own country. My father disinherited me because I lived there instead of coming home. Why shouldn't I live where I prefer, and do as I like?"

I remembered his Mother, she was much interested in philanthropic work, and left at her death large bequests to various institutions, one of them was the Home for the Friendless, and he told me that his Mother used to take him there when he was a little boy, to excite his sympathies, and imbue him with the spirit of humanitarianism, "but we can't all think alike, you know," he said, "and parents ought not to expect too much of their children."

His Father had been one of the old millionaires of Washington Square, and he was the only child.

"I am contesting my Father's will," said he, "but it takes so very long, and in the meantime I have scarcely enough to keep body and soul together. I shall stay with you until I get my check from my lawyer, and when I get hard up again—for it happens very often—I may be glad to come back to you, and I hope you will have a vacancy. Please do the best you can for me, for you never had any one more needy, although in a different way of course."

In a couple of months he left us. When he paid his bill it amused me to see how punctilious he was to a cent. There were three cents coming to him out of a dime, which he gave in payment for some postage, and he sat

and waited quite a long time for the necessary pennies to be given him.

We were then living in St. Ann's Avenue. When we moved to Fordham he turned up again, and remained with us about the same length of time, upon the same conditions, always walking about with his eyes cast down, so that no one should annoy him by saying "good-morning."

When we moved to Mt. Vernon he came to us for the third time, never changing his tactics in the least. And six months after that when he turned up again, I had no vacant room that suited him.

He seemed to be an utterly selfish man.

"But my dear Madame, could you not turn some one out of a room, and take me in. I think you ought to understand how urgent my need is, it would be horrible for me to go into a common boarding house to be stared at."

I told him it was impossible for me to make any such changes, but that we had a Home in Tenafly, which he was very glad to hear of, and he at once went over there, and stated his wants and wishes to the Superintendent, who happened to be able to accommodate him—much in the same way as we had been accustomed to do. He had a table to himself in a corner of the dining-room, where he could sit with his back to the people, and they soon learned to understand that he was something very unique, who was never to be approached or spoken to under any consideration.

When anything annoyed him he was apt to be very irritable.

"Madame," he said to me one day, "you must instruct your maid as to the proper manner of addressing me when you have corn among your vegetables for dinner, for she is in the habit of yelling to me, "Sir, do you like to have corns?" "

You can imagine how unpleasant it is for me to be reminded of anything so disagreeable just as I am going to eat my dinner.

Those who had rooms near him used to complain that he disturbed them in the middle of the night, in opening and shutting his trunk, and when I mentioned it to him he said—

"It is my habit to get up in the night and eat a couple of sandwiches which I keep in my trunk, and as I am sleepy the lid falls down very often before I know it."

When he left us this time he did not return.

We never heard of him after that.

## CHAPTER XXXI.

### A CHAPTER ON DOGS.

Now that we had such a nice country Home, I wished very much to have a good dog, but couldn't afford an expensive one; I was offered a dachshund for twelve dollars, but that was beyond my limit of five dollars, for we had to practice the strictest economy to keep out of debt.

I heard of a collie owned by a butcher who lived at the top of a tenement house in New York City, and that the poor dog suffered shut up for want of a run in the fresh air, and that the butcher wanted to sell it.

I went to find this dog; the butcher was out, but I saw his wife, and she showed me the collie shut up in the little hall room.

It was a beauty, and looked wistfully at me. I offered her five dollars, but she shook her head, and we haggled some time over the price. Finally she said—

"Vell zat dog do make me troobles, you can have him for ze five dollar."

The next day was Sunday.

Just as the church bells were ringing, the butcher appeared on the scene and demanded his dog, saying—

"My wife didn't haf no pissness to sell zat dog. I gif you back ze five dol, never I make no sich pargain."

And so I had to part with the dog.

In about a week the butcher sent me a postal saying I might have the dog for seven dollars, and I was only too glad to get possession of the beautiful collie once more.

But I didn't want to lose sight of him for fear something might happen to him, and I decided to walk with him to the 23rd Street ferry. The woman fastened a piece of string to his collar, and we started off.

It was some three miles to the ferry, and although my companion trotted along valiantly, I found myself tired out, and still far away from the ferry.

"What shall I do?" I said to myself. "How shall I ever get there?" I sank down on a box outside a grocery store, my good dog nestling beside me, as though contented to stay there forever, so long as I was with him.

Sometimes a boy would come along and speak to the dog, but he had been so long shut up by himself, that he was very timid, and seemed afraid if a man or boy came near him.

Then I saw several drays driving along. It was Saturday, and some were empty, and the thought occurred to me that my chance had come. I presume, in my anxiety, I had lost all thought of the proprietors, for I sat on that soap box, and waved my handkerchief to attract the driver's attention, but the only person that paid any heed to me was an officer of the peace who was passing along on his beat and swinging his club.

"What's the matter wid ye, madame?" he asked.

I explained the cause of my dilemma.

He stood awhile staring at me, as though he couldn't make up his mind as to what sort of a woman I was. Certainly my appearance was not in my favor, the wind was blowing a tremendous gale, my hat was all on one side and I couldn't straighten it with one hand, and didn't dare let go my leash of the dog to use both.

Finally the policeman gave a comical look at the dog, and said, "Oh, well, madame, them animals is allers a sort o' nuisance, ony fit to be on a farm," and walked away, my dog watching his club as he disappeared.

But it was getting late, and the grocer's man came and looked at me occasionally as though he thought I had sat on his box long enough, and at my earnest request he hailed a boy, who for a nickel was willing to stand on the curb, and call out to the first empty dray that came along.

When he had stood there for some time, he called back to me saying, "See here, Missis, won't it do if it ain't empty—just room enough for you and the dog?"

"Oh, yes, anything will do," I said.

Before very long a dray drove up to the curbstone, and I was so thankful that I could have cried for joy.

"Will you take me and my dog to the ferry for fifty cents?" I asked.

"Sure," was the response, "jump in Missis."

But I couldn't jump in—the dray was so high.

"Please hurry," he continued.

People hurrying along the side walk now stopped and made a little circle around me and the dog, which seemed to be getting more frightened every minute.

"Oh, won't some one lift me in," I cried, and a coal man left his job and lifted me onto the dray, but the leash of the dog was too short, and he was so frightened; then the cord broke, and I lost sight of him.

In my distress, I cried to be let down again. I could

see the dog on the opposite side of the street, running away from those who were after him, and I followed saying, "Oh, please get him, he will not bite." Finally they got hold of the dog. The man drove over to us. I never knew how I got into that wagon but I found myself sitting on the floor with the dog's head in my lap.

They had given him the name of Nero, but that savored of cruelty, and I named him Rex for he was as good as any king; as I patted his head and talked to him he seemed well pleased with his new name.

The man drove along at a furious rate. I thought I had better get the fifty cents ready, so I fumbled in my purse for it, but the dray jolted so tremendously, that it slipped from my fingers, and I saw it roll down into the road. Finally we reached the ferry. With the help of a man I slipped down from the dray, and kept tight hold of the dog.

As soon as we landed on the side walk the dray disappeared onto the boat which had just come in, and the driver never waited for his fifty cents.

"That dog is a collie crossed with a Newfoundland," said a gentleman who sat beside us in the ferry boat.

Rex was a great pleasure in the Home. When any one went out for a walk he would follow them, as though to take care of them. He always knew the time when one old gentleman went down for the mail two and three times a day, and always went with him frisking about across the railroad track; and one day a train ran over him and killed him.

The poor old gentleman was broken-hearted, and cried like a child. Dogs seem to have no sense of danger. They will get under the horses' feet, and under the wheels of autos, and are often killed through their carelessness.

After that I bought a little collie for five dollars.

One of the old ladies had brought her dog with her, he had died of old age. His name was Tobias. She wanted my dog named after him, but as I didn't like such a long name, I said we would call him Toby for short. He was only two weeks old, a very scrubby-looking little fellow, not at all handsome, but he grew into a beautiful dog, and is now twelve years old.

When it snows, he may be seen walking up a hill, and when he reaches the top, he stands still awhile looking around as though watching for something, then goes plowing along with his nose in the snow. Afterwards, we see him walking slowly back again.

One day I said to one of the old gentlemen, "It is so strange, Toby never goes out alone when it rains, but as soon as it snows he marches off up the hill, and never goes there at any other time."

"Of course," he answered. "He is a cross between a St. Bernard, that makes him so gentle, and the instinct of the St. Bernard is there, and as long as he lives he will go looking in the snow expecting to find some one buried under it."

We had a little rat terrier from the Bide-a-Wee. It proved to be a poor, sick little creature, and couldn't eat. Toby would look at him, and seemed very much concerned. We decided to send him back to the Bide-a-Wee, where he would have further medical treatment. So he was crated, and our man took him to the station in a wheelbarrow—Toby following behind like a mourner at a funeral. Afterward he would be seen watching at the gate, as though he expected his little companion to come back.

With all respect to the management of the Bide-a-Wee —would it not be better to chloroform the sick cats and dogs, than spend money on their treatment, and risk the

danger of hydrophobia, which is such a secret and terrible disease?

## CHAPTER XXXII.

### A GHOST IN THE BEDROOM.

The fact of mental telegraphy was brought very forcibly to my notice one summer when a journalist wished to spend a time of convalescence at our Tenafly Home. She was a bright woman who had been on the staff of the New York Herald.

I wished very much to accommodate her, but there was only one room that I could offer her, and in that room there had very recently been a death.

When I took her into the apartment, and relieved her of her crutches, I said to myself, "We mustn't let her know that there was a death in this room so lately, for her long illness after her terrible accident may have left her nervous."

"The sun comes to every room in our Home during some part of the day," I said, feeling it necessary to make some remark about the room, for I was anxious that she should enjoy and profit by the change of air and our hospitality.

She made no comment, but sat silent gazing round the room. I did not speak, but waited for her. After a while she said, "I feel that there has been a death in this room."

I was now silent. I did not ask, how do you know. I knew perfectly well that it was that mysterious transmittance of thought of my brain to hers—that mental telegraphy which, like electricity, will be developed more and more as time goes on. I knew it was best to be honest and I said, "It was an old teacher who occupied

this room for years. Her life passed quietly away. She had no disease whatever—not even a cough; her strength simply gave out."

"Oh, it would make no difference to me," she said. "I am not so silly, but I could feel there had been a death here as soon as I came into the room."

#### A STREAK OF FORTUNE.

As I have said before, I cannot help smiling when I remember our comical experiences with some of our help.

Every year in New York City there are thousands of men out of work who seem to have no special trade or vocation, and cannot earn enough to pay their way, and the daily papers have a column of these men offering to do anything to earn a living.

Now, as we wanted a useful man at our Home in Tenafly, and could afford only very small wages, I advertised for a man who would be satisfied with a comfortable home and five dollars per month. I always believe in advertising instead of going to the bureaus. From a number of answers I selected one, and asked the writer to call on me.

I was surprised to find him so intelligent and well-educated. He spoke English perfectly well, but told me that he was a Swede by birth. He could not give me any reference—I think he said he had been travelling about so much, never stopping long enough in one place to make any acquaintance.

What was more strange still, he wouldn't give me any name except that it was Albert.

However, his manner was so gentlemanly and he impressed me so favorably, that I felt constrained to waive every other consideration, and I engaged him at once.

He proved a most efficient servant, he was indeed willing to do anything, many things that we could not have asked him to do, he would volunteer to accomplish. If he saw in one of the rooms a shabby piece of furniture, he would ask for a few cents' worth of material and work away at it, until it looked like new. If any of the old people wanted letters written for them, he was always at their service.

When he had been about a month with us we missed him one day, and as he was not in the habit of absenting himself at any time, we were afraid that something had happened to him. So we searched everywhere. To our astonishment he was found at the back of the grounds lying on the grass in a state of intoxication.

The next day he appeared before us just the same as usual, apologized in a most respectful manner for his absence from work, and explained to us that it was a habit that he had fought for years to overcome, but that he had not will-power to succeed. That it had been just the same with his father, who had been intemperate during a long life, which had been filled with resources and opportunities which he had thrown away.

Month after month passed on, and when he might have had a room in the house and been warm and comfortable, he preferred to sleep in the barn, and as it was a very severe winter, and the wind and snow blowing in many a crevice, I was afraid we would sometime find him frozen to death, for he was so thin, that his bones didn't seem to have enough flesh to cover them. But he assured me that his life had been so full of hardships and privations, that the shelter of the barn was sufficient for him, and I could not prevail upon him to make any change.

Although he was intemperate occasionally, very little

liquor must have satisfied him, for he never asked for more than the five dollars per month. Of course, we looked somewhat after his wardrobe, for he well deserved it.

Now it happened that some ladies in Englewood knew an old lady who had a very comfortable income, but on account of her eccentric character, she never boarded long in one place, and was a constant anxiety to her friends.

When they heard of our Home in Tenafly with its pleasant grounds, they thought it would be an ideal place for her, and as she could afford to pay well for the accommodation, they thought it would compensate us for any of her vagaries which she might impose upon us. So with the pleasant prospect of this addition to our exchequer we welcomed this new guest, and offered her the largest room in the house.

"But I must have another room for my seven trunks, where I can always get at them at any time," she said.

So we found her an extra room for her many belongings, and she seemed to settle down quite contented, to the great satisfaction of her friends.

She was not long in discovering Albert's many good points. He was always at her beck and call, and never lost patience with her, and she finally concluded that the time had now come for her to go to housekeeping again, for if her cook suddenly forsook her in the midst of getting her dinner, Albert could take her place in the kitchen and fill the bill.

So, ignoring the advice of her friends, she hired a cottage, and moved into it—herself, our Albert and her many belongings. I had always told our help when I engaged them that I should expect that they would better themselves as soon as the opportunity offered,

and also I would be glad to help them to do this. However, the piece of good fortune that fell to Albert was beyond anything that I could have expected, for the old lady didn't live very long, and at her death bequeathed Albert all her money, and he left this country for good, returning to Sweden where he could spend the rest of his days in ease and comfort.

#### MOODY AND SANKEY.

An Episcopal clergyman on Long Island wrote me that they were looking for a home for an old lady who had kept a school in the long ago. She owned the little cottage in which she lived, and the five dollars per month furnished by the township was all she had to depend upon, and he had persuaded her to dispose of her place, and with the money get admitted into a Home for life.

The cottage was not worth anything, so no one wanted it, but the lot brought three hundred dollars.

The clergyman's wife made an appointment to meet me at the train, and take me to see the old lady, and finally we reached the poor little dilapidated cottage. I found there was something very gentle and pleasing in this old school mistress.

"You have been so very kind," she said to the minister's wife, "but it grieves me to part with Moody and Sankey."

The lady smiled as she saw me looking surprised, for I had understood that she had no one belonging to her.

"I shall find good homes for them," she said, and I followed her eyes across the room to the old stove. On the left of it was a big tabby cat, on the right, was a big tortoiseshell cat, behind the stove were three kittens on a cushion.

"But don't so many cats eat a great deal?" I asked.

"Oh, no, I've brought them up on rolled oats. Moody enjoys them, and Sankey would ask for nothing better."

"Now, my dear woman," said the lady, "you had better hand over the three hundred dollars now, for I am so afraid you might be robbed, people know you have sold the place, and there are so many tramps around, and as it is getting so cold, we had better pack up the cats and we will take them with us, and I'll find a home for them among our church people as I drive Miss Fisher to the train."

She agreed to this, but her voice trembled, and a sob escaped her. At last, two old baskets were found, Moody was disposed of in one, and Sankey in the other, and with the three kittens in a bag in my lap, we drove off.

We had gone several miles before we reached any habitation, for the old lady lived so far from civilization, but finally we came upon some straggling houses. The first that we called at agreed to relieve us of the three kittens, and promised to drown them, saying, "Don't care much for the job, but will do it to oblige you, madam." We soon found a home for Moody. "Such a big, strong cat must be a good rat catcher," said the new owner.

We were not quite so successful with Sankey.

"My husband can't abide a tortoiseshell cat," said one, "besides we have a cat, and that's enough."

However, a little girl begged her mother to take Sankey, and I finally reached the station in time for the train.

"I am so thankful to get this settled," said the lady, as we took luncheon. "I have been so afraid that some winter morning we should find her frozen to death."

It was arranged that the clergyman should bring the old lady on the following Saturday, and that I should meet them at the depot, and take the old lady home with me.

So on the Saturday morning I was on hand waiting for the Long Island train to come in. Many passengers alighted, but there was no sign of such an old lady. I then waited for the next train to come in, but without any better success. She was not there.

When I arrived home, I found a telegram waiting for me. I had left home early to do some shopping on my way, so I was not there when it came.

It said, "Don't come—letter will follow."

The letter informed me that the next morning, when the old lady awoke she heard a meow outside of the house, and on opening the door, Moody and Sankey ran in.

They must have travelled several miles in the night.

The old lady refused to part with them again.

We returned the entrance fee, and heard no more of Moody and Sankey.

#### A HOUSE FULL OF CATS.

One morning our postman said to me, "I hear you want a good cat, now I know where you can get one. I can tell you of a woman who deals in cats," and he wrote down the address on the back of one of my letters. I decided to get one of her cats for our Tenafly Home. Now, a woman who dealt in cats was certainly a curiosity, and as I did want a good mouser, I was willing to take the trouble to call at that particular house the next time I went down town.

I was surprised to find myself in such a respectable

neighborhood. A very neat colored woman, who resembled an East Indian negress, answered my ring, and showed me into an ante-room with very little furniture.

I stated my business, and she said, "Madame, please send up your card."

This was another surprise for me—to find the vender of cats living in such style, and I thought to myself, can it be that she trains cats for a circus, but then can cats be trained? And where are these cats? For I didn't hear a mew, and as I peeped into the rooms across the hall where the doors were ajar, no sign of a cat presented itself. It was a very quiet street, and all was as quiet as though it were the middle of the night.

Presently I heard the rustle of a silk skirt, then the door opened wider and a lady in a black and white tea gown glided into the room. She had a sweet, soft voice, and a very charming manner, and was evidently every inch a gentlewoman.

I remembered that I had seen her before—her Mother was one of the first subscribers to our Home, and one of our best friends. When we gave our first fair at the Waldorf, one of our chief attractions was a set of china beautifully painted by her, which she donated, and then bought it in herself, for a wedding present to some one. That was years ago. Finally, there were only three daughters left, and this lady was one of them. They had a beautiful place at Kingsbridge which they had no use for, as they preferred to live in their city house, but they would not part with it, because the trees that adorned the park had all been planted by their Grandfather when he was a young man.

It was no wonder that for a moment I forgot my errand, and sat silently thinking.

"I understand you want a cat," she said, "I am sorry I haven't one for you."

Oh, so you are entirely out of them at present."

"No, I have plenty of them, but none to suit you."

I thought this was very strange, then I added, "I am willing to pay something for the cat." "Oh, I don't make money by my cats, on the contrary, I spend money on them. It costs me considerably more than a thousand a year to keep this house. Would you like to see my cats?"

I said I should be very glad, and she led the way up stairs. In the front room on the second floor was a number of cats lying on a large bed, apparently asleep. On the mantelpiece two or three cats were sitting, with their eyes shut, and around the room on the floor were some more cats. I well remember counting thirteen. In the middle of the floor was a large dish of raw chopped meat, and a large pan of milk.

"They seem to be all asleep," I said.

"Because they are sick," she answered. I then followed her into the back room, here also were cats on the bed, on the mantelpiece, on two tables, and on the floor. They all seemed to be in the same drowsy condition, with a great dish of meat, which looked as if it hadn't been touched, and the pan of milk. She then took me up-stairs, here also were the like conditions—cats—cats—cats.

"Of course, my friends think I am a crank," she said, "but I sympathize so much with poor, lame, sick cats, because they seldom find a friend, while all the other animals have a chance to get pampered up. But I shall look out for a cat for you, because I think you would be kind to it."

So I left my address, and in the course of a week, the negress came with a handsome little basket, which had evidently been made for the purpose of carrying a small

animal, and inside was a tabby kitten bedecked with broad blue ribbons.

The kitten proved of no use. It was a poor, shy, timid little thing, but I didn't like to send it back. So I kept it until we were giving up the house to move to Mt. Vernon, and then I sent a post card to the lady explaining the facts, and the next day the negress came and relieved us of this small responsibility.

Some time after, I saw a notice in the papers, stating that a complaint had been made that the Home for cats was unsanitary, and that boys would wound a cat, and make it lame, in order to receive the five or ten cents which was always ready for them upon delivery of the animal at that basement door. I believe the cats were transferred to the country.

### CHAPTER XXXIII.

#### TOO ARDENT A LOVER.

I found it a very great advantage to have the two Homes. Sometimes an old person would be very troublesome, and then I would transfer them to the other Home.

At one time an old lawyer had the habit of intruding himself upon the attention of the old ladies. He seemed to have been quite a lady's man, and would follow them round to talk to them, much to the annoyance of some of them. He was a tall, fine-looking man, with a very kindly and handsome face, but was rather simple-minded, being over eighty years of age. He took a particular fancy to a good-looking old lady who became so angry with him that one day she slapped his face, and there was quite a

quarrel between them, and for fear of another outbreak I brought him to Mt. Vernon.

He settled down very quietly, either he didn't find the Mt. Vernon ladies so attractive, or he was afraid of being sent away.

In a couple of years' time his mind was so far gone, that we had to send him to the State hospital at Poughkeepsie. When the two officers came for him he seemed to be afraid of them, but he would go anywhere with me, so I went with him to the hospital. When we entered that spacious building he said to me, "Miss Fisher, is this another of your hotels?"

They showed me around the building, and he kept close beside me. As soon as I saw the opportunity, I slipped away.

#### THE TWO ORPHANS.

An old lady and gentleman had not met for many years. They were both Southerners, and in the days of their prosperity had lived for years in a family hotel patronized by Southerners. Both were becoming childish, and they would sit all day together, and the old gentleman would often repeat "we are two orphans."

One afternoon we missed the old lady, and I said to him, "What has become of your friend?"

"I really don't know," he answered. "She asked me if I had any money, as she would like to borrow some of it. I gave her twenty-five cents, it was all I had, and I have not seen her since."

"You did very wrong," I said. "You know we never let her go out alone," and I gave him a good scolding, adding, "now you'll never get back your twenty-five cents, and you deserve to lose it."

Night came on, but there was no sign of her.

I knew that she would command the respect of most people she might address, for she was well dressed, and had every appearance of a lady, but I was afraid that she would get on a train with the hope of getting to her old home in Charleston, South Carolina.

After considerable worry and telephoning, it was not until the morning that I heard of her, when the police notified me that they had found her.

All she could tell me was that some ladies living in a very nice house, had invited her to spend the night with them.

The old gentleman became very helpless, he had a mania for changing his clothes, from summer-wear to winter-wear, saying he was so often too hot or too cold.

As his room was opposite mine, I often looked in upon him. He had been with us ten years, and everybody liked him, and the nurse was very kind to him, but he often tried her patience by constantly changing his clothes.

One night I heard her scolding him, and I went in to see what was the matter. He was sitting up in bed trying to struggle on a gauze under shirt, over a thick winter one.

"I was so dreadfully hot," he said, "I shall be so comfortable when I get this on."

The nurse was lying on the couch. "He has tired me out," she said, "changing his things, so I threw the thin shirt to him, and you see what he's about."

In about an hour I looked in again. The summer shirt was all crooked and only half on. "I am so much cooler now," he said.

#### A POSSIBLE ROMANCE.

One of our old teachers told us that she and the Pope of Rome were lovers in the long ago when they were both young and went to the same church together.

"I don't believe it," said one of the old ladies. "I don't think it is possible."

But there were those who thought that such a thing might have been. There was some discussion.

Finally an old gentleman said, "The only way to determine this would be to write to his Holiness, and ask for the truth of the matter."

"But that might not work very well," said another, "for you know it generally happens that the memories of a man's early loves are very elusive."

"Katrina has always been very truthful," said one of her friends, "and I believe all she says, and why shouldn't the Pope have a little romance as well as any other man?"

This summer of 1914 has brought us the tidings of the dreadful war in Europe.

Like all sensible Americans, we have kept strictly to the advice of our good President, Woodrow Wilson, to observe a perfect neutrality. In our Home we have a mixed nationality, and many of our guests, either by birth or ancestry, are of the various European nations, and when we meet in the dining-room not a word is uttered in reference to this warfare.

At my table is a Danish lady. We know she will never forgive the Germans for taking a part of Denmark some years ago, but she never utters a word. A German lady who declared that the Kaiser could not do anything wrong, and that Europe depended on Germany for everything, sits opposite a French lady who smiles and is silent. She knows that the German lady is very sensitive, nervous and excitable, and she has too much true politeness to offer any protest. Nevertheless there are charming little coteries held in the snug little bedrooms, where kindred spirits meet and can vent their preferences and give offence to no one.

## OUR TENAFLY HOME

In 1899, we had over a score of subscribers in New Jersey, through the efforts of Miss Belle Durkee, of Passaic. Also we had a number of applicants in New Jersey, and we found it advisable to have a separate Home in this State. Mrs. H. F. Ahrens, of Leonia, found us the fine property at Tenafly, on a line with the beautiful Palisades. Mrs. Terhune (Marion Harland) who had lived many years in Newark, was the strongest promoter of the new enterprise.

She called the first meeting in Newark, where she had many friends, and many prominent women responded to the call, among them Mrs. Andrew J. Newbury, and the Association was organized, and we were fortunate in securing Mrs. Newbury as Treasurer. This office she has now filled for fifteen years, and we cannot thank her enough for her faithful service in this onerous duty. Mrs. Terhune was the pioneer of all our movements, as she has been ever since.

Mrs. Chas. B. Yardley, of Orange, who was a member of the Sorosis, advised us to interest the clubwomen of New Jersey, and before long the New Jersey State Federation of Women's Clubs and the federated clubs of the State, were enlisted in the good work to the number of thirty-seven. All of these have responded to our appeal for the mortgage fund.

Miss Elizabeth Demarest, of Passaic, gave us valuable assistance in starting our Association, and later on Miss Elizabeth B. Vermilye interested herself in the Home, and became our President, which office we trust she will hold as long as she lives.

Several of the Managers gave charming entertainments —Mrs. W. J. Boggs, Mrs. Thomas M. Moore, Mrs.

Philip J. Koonz, and Miss A. P. Townsend. Mrs. Florence Howe Hall gave a lecture in Newark; Mrs. Marie T. Lange a lecture on Japan at Asbury Park; Mrs. Marion H. Zabriskie a grand concert at the Lyceum in Englewood, and several others at the Home.

Mrs. Terhune has pioneered the authors' readings every year, introducing well-known authors to a large and appreciative audience. And these authors have brought new friends to the Home.

I am always glad of an opportunity to do what I can for what is, in my opinion, one of the worthiest of our charities.

BRONSON HOWARD.

I am happy to lend the Home a hand when I can. May all good things come to it! RUTH McENERY STUART.

A cause that, of course, demands my deepest sympathy.

MARGARET DELAND.

I shall be very glad indeed to send my usual subscription to the Mary Fisher Home. HENRY VAN DYKE.

You know how warm is my interest in your beautiful charity. I am always willing to do all I can for it.

ELIZABETH B. CUSTER.

The cause you represent has my heartiest sympathy.

WOODROW WILSON.

I am naturally in favor of Authors' Homes, and particularly of the one at Tenafly. It is beautifully situated, well-managed, and financed by some of the ablest women in America.

WILL CARLETON.

Mr. Will Carleton took much interest in the Home; he often visited it, and was always ready to give his kind services to preside at our entertainments, and read from his poems, which were always so popular. He has now been called to the Higher Life, and we shall always remember him as one we can never replace. It was through him that Mr. Andrew Carnegie subscribed five

hundred dollars toward taking the title of the Home. Since that Mr. Carnegie has become a patron.

Mrs. Alexander Campbell gave an entertainment in Newark; Miss Snyder gave one at Asbury Park and Montclair; Miss Elizabeth Timlow in Montclair; Mrs. Julia Roe Davis had interesting meetings at her school in Newark.

Also as we look back we find the names of others who have joined the immortals. The Rev. Louis S. Osborne, D. D., of Newark, gave us much encouragement, and spoke of his faith in woman's work.

Through Miss E. A. Allen, of Hoboken, we received a legacy of two thousand dollars from a public school teacher; a contribution of five hundred dollars from Mrs. Winthrop, of New York, who started a fund for building a wing to the Home, which cost over five thousand dollars.

Mrs. Robert Shaw was our first Superintendent, and gave efficient service for many years.

#### SUBSCRIBERS.

Among the subscribers and those who have rendered kind service in the past as well as in the present are: Mrs. R. T. Auchmuty, Mrs. C. B. Alexander, Mrs. Edward A. Albright, Mrs. J. A. Bradley, Mrs. Henry A. Barry, Mrs. Joseph D. Bedle, Mrs. W. F. Bathgate, Mrs. Henry G. Bell, Mrs. J. P. Boggs, Mrs. John H. Ballantine, Miss Laura L. Barnes, Mr. Walter Bogart, Rev. Antoinette B. Blackwell, Rev. Fisher Howe Booth, Miss N. Louise Buckland, Mrs. Grover Cleveland, Mrs. Alexander Campbell, Mrs. B. D. Cauldwell, Mr. Andrew Carnegie, Mrs. Andrew Carnegie, Mrs. P. W. Doremus, Mrs. A. S. Diven, Miss Amanda M. Douglas, Mrs. A. McC. Daulton, Rev. Chas. Douglas, Mrs. Robert Dun Douglas,

Miss E. E. Dana, Miss M. F. Demarest, Mrs. de Mille, Mr. Wm. C. de Mille, Miss Sara Esterbrook, Mrs. J. F. Freeman, Miss Ada D. Fuller, Dr. Joseph Fewsmith, Mrs. Hugh F. Fox, Mr. Daniel Chester French, James M. Green, Ph. D., LL. D., Rev. John Gaston, Mrs. Virginia C. Huyler, Mrs. J. G. Holland, Mrs. Garret A. Hobart, Hon. Chas. M. Howe, Hon. Thomas S. Henry, Mrs. J. F. Hadley, Miss C. E. Hartt, Mrs. T. V. Johnson, Rev. Philo F. Leavens, Mr. Edward Thomas Moore, Mrs. Benjamin E. McGrew, Mrs. L. K. McClymonds, Miss Mary McKeen, Dr. Sarah F. Mackintosh, Allen Marquand, Ph. D., Henry Morton, Ph. D., Mrs. Washington Paulison, Miss Lavinia F. Pond, Miss Florence Palmer, Mrs. C. M. K. Paulison, Prof. James C. Riggs, Mrs. A. G. Randolph, Rev. James F. Riggs, Mrs. F. W. Rheinfelder, Mrs. Wm. H. Rhodes, Mr. Fred S. Shepherd, Prof. R. Spaulding, Mrs. Touzo Sauvage, Rev. Henry M. Saunders, Mrs. Elliott F. Shepherd, Mr. Chas. Scribner, Mrs. E. O. Weeks, Miss H. Winton, Mrs. F. M. Wheeler, Mr. Geo. A. Zabriskie, Mrs. E. F. C. Young—and many others.

FROM THE ANNUAL REPORT OF THE SECRETARY, 1914.

The celebration today of the fifteenth anniversary of the Mary Fisher Home Association of New Jersey, or *Crystal* Wedding, leads to the consideration of the similitude of this organization to the *Crystal*, and though we disclaim the conceit of the possession of all the good qualities of the *Crystal*, we can look upon it as a symbol of what we desire to represent—purity, truth, beauty and endurance.

The Mary Fisher Home has *endured* these fifteen years and has cared for over four hundred and fifty guests, supplying a home for a class hitherto unconsidered in

the establishment of Homes that appeal to the humane public.

The motive for this work has been pure and true—"only the thought of humble service."

The spiritual beauty of the work Rev. Dr. Lyman Whitney Allen effectively expressed in his poem, "The House of Mary"—the Home. May it always be "Faith's glory when the lights of life burn low!"

That the Home now has as an honored guest the Founder and former President, is a blessing of great value, and though almost physically helpless, she is a wonderful example of patience, unselfishness and cheerfulness.

Of the twenty-six other guests at the Home at present, many have "wrought life's happy miracles" in educational, literary, musical, artistic and other lines of brain work.

At the authors' matinee at the Waldorf, January 29, 1914, the Rev. Lyman Whitney Allen, D. D., of Newark, read his poem, "The House of Mary," written after visiting the Home.

#### THE HOUSE OF MARY

Behold it! There it stands against the pines,  
Amid green meadows, wrapped by stillness round,  
A simple house and yet magnifical,  
For through its windows and oft-opened door  
There streams a light, there flow sweet fragrances  
From subtle spirituality within.

It is the House of Mary. She, like one  
Of ancient days low at anointed feet,  
Who heard Love's oracles from Kingly lips,  
Chose the good part which from her shall not pass,  
Seeing it has eternal essences.

Therein she sits, the Founder of the House,  
As 't were enthroned, though in her queenly heart  
Only the thought of humble service dwells.

About her circle leal confederates,  
Sooth patrons of the Muses' almoners,  
Regnant with her—a sorcerous company,  
Adept in every bright beneficence,  
Drawing from acreage wide those finer souls  
Who sight Love's vision and build Duty's dream.

So stands the House of Mary, monument  
To that high law which sways the sons of God,  
"Who loses life shall find it." So it stands,  
By grace of her who re-engrossed the law  
In sacrificial fealty to its spell.

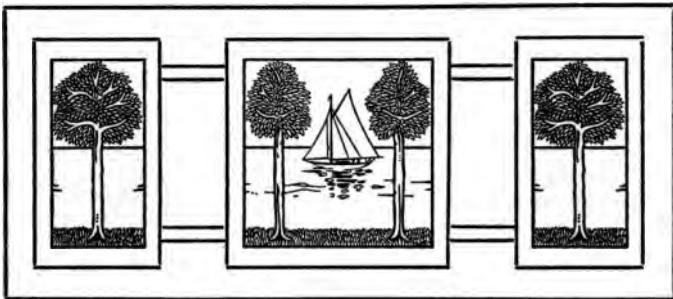
The House of Mary has its many guests—  
Those who have wrought life's happy miracles  
With art's uplifted rod, eliciting  
Fountains from phantom rocks and roses sweet  
From mystic sands, and by weird conjuring  
Have builded cities, ranged great armaments,  
Driv'n faery ships about the seven seas,  
Surcharged the boreal blasts with summerness  
And all the woosome winds with minstrelsy  
Along the populous highways of the years.

The House of Mary has one portal large—  
Embrasure toward the Blue; and presences,  
Which oft descend angel-trailèd ways  
In times of eld, still mediate, and part  
In vatic hours the veil of destiny,  
Showing the dream fulfilled beyond the dream.

The House of Mary! It shall ever be  
Love's shelter ministrant to musing minds,  
Hope's hermitage within the groves of art,  
Faith's glory when the lights of life burn low,  
A welcome to heaven-born imaginings  
That crowd on feebleness defying age.

The House of Mary! It shall never fail.  
It has foundations wrought of many hearts,  
Whose bounteous care shall follow bounteous gold  
Through golden years, and be its strength and stay.

All hail to Mary and her noble House!  
All hail to Love's defending Sisterhood!



## THE TRUE STORY OF THE POE COTTAGE AND THE POE PARK.

Mrs. Melusina Fay Peirce was one of the first literary women to be interested in our Home. She was our Vice-President when it was called the Home Hotel, and we were maintaining a branch of our Home at Fordham in 1895-96.

Mrs. Peirce recognized Edgar Allan Poe as the greatest genius among American poets, and cherished toward him a deep gratitude because of his chivalry toward her sex, and it was given to her to conceive the beautiful idea of rescuing the Fordham cottage of this poet from obliteration, by creating around it a small park to consist of its original grounds of three acres, together with five more along both sides of the Kingsbridge Road whereon it stood.

This Park was to be the open-air Pantheon for American poets and therefore to America what the "Poets' Corner" in Westminster Abbey is to England.

Mrs. Peirce had for many months been trying in vain to interest leading New Yorkers in thus rescuing Poe's last home on its own site as he knew it.

We were only too proud to espouse this laudable undertaking. We gladly formed ourselves into a Committee for this purpose, and issued a circular inviting the people of Fordham to co-operate with us.

Several did so, and the Taxpayers' Alliance of Fordham passed a resolution to the effect that "the well-known cottage and site, the home of Edgar Allan Poe, should be preserved, and land should be secured and a small public park established at the place."—(Dixon's Up-Town Weekly, Jan. 25, 1895.)

Now this home of the illustrious poet as many knew it and as I remember it as a child—was very picturesque in its rural simplicity and beauty. It stood secluded in tall forest groves on a grassy hill-top, diversified with vine-covered rocks overlooking the Bronx valley. What an ideal spot for a Poets' Park!

Mrs. Peirce's proposition was to restore the grounds as they were in the poet's day, when he and his exquisite young wife used to sit under the big cherry tree in front of the cottage or in the wild cherry grove among the rocks at its back. Within its pitiful little walls were written all his latest masterpieces. What an immortal and tremendous distinction for those walls!

We held interesting meetings at our Fordham Branch. Mrs. Peirce would give glimpses of the poet's life and read some of his poems. William Fearing Gill, one of Poe's biographers, attended our first meeting, warmly indorsed the plan, and said he much regretted that he had not thought of it when he was the owner of the cottage a few years before. Our committee waited upon Mayor Strong, who listened attentively and was favor-

ably disposed to the plan of saving the tiny dwelling by surrounding it with the proposed Poets' Park. The Mayor said: "If we save the cottage at all we ought to do it handsomely." Gen. W. H. Morris, son of the George P. Morris who once owned the famous *Home Journal* to which Edgar Poe was a contributor—lived near the Poe cottage on the Kingsbridge Road. He was actively enlisted on behalf of our project and made for us a map with estimate of the value of every house and lot on the hill-top—the amount being less than \$300,000. We were cheerfully hoping for success.

The inspiration of Mrs. Peirce's plan was her knowledge that the Hon. Abram S. Hewitt, when he was the Mayor of New York, had got passed a law which compelled the city to spend one million dollars a year on small parks. This was in the year 1887-8, but none of this money had hitherto been appropriated, so that in seven years it had accumulated to seven available millions. Well, indeed, could the city afford to spend a small portion of this sum to purchase this rocky hill-top and return it to its old-time verdant beauty. This could easily have been done, for the Kingsbridge Road was still the old original country road.

But the Commissioner of Public Works of the Bronx, Louis Haffen,—afterward President of the Bronx Borough and during Mayor McClellan's administration tried and deposed for malfeasance in office—intrigued against the Poet's Park, partly because some wooden dwellings on the acreage would have to be bought and moved off by the city, but still more because he had made a survey of the Kingsbridge Road which was to widen and grade it down to an ordinary city street. He knew that his "improvement" would *cut the Poe cottage in two*, thus compelling its destruction or its removal.

from its own sacred site—but knowing, he did not care.

Now appears on the scene Mr. Appleton Morgan, President of the Shakespeare Society of New York. Early in 1895 he had informed the public that his Society had bought the Poe cottage for its headquarters. The money to pay for it, however, had not been forthcoming, and his plan had collapsed. Hearing of our movement, he wrote, requesting an invitation to our meetings, which was cordially granted, as we supposed we should find in him a fellow-worker in the rescue of the hallowed spot. But while pretending to act with us, he secretly joined Mr. Haffen and other Fordham politicians against us. In collusion with them he drew up a bill to be sent to their representative at Albany which created a little park of two and two-thirds acres *across the road* from the Poe cottage to which the city could move the cottage when the Kingsbridge Road should be widened. The bill did not mention the Poe cottage. Its terms simply specified a park at "One Hundred and Ninety-second Street," and it was rushed through the Legislature without the members knowing anything about its connection with Edgar Poe's last home! Senator Stranahan, Chairman of the Senate Committee on Cities, wrote to Mrs. Peirce that the bill never could have been passed had they realized such connection. Thereafter for months Mrs. Peirce devoted her time and gave freely of her money to the printing and mailing of hundreds of leaflets and memorials to the Legislature, to the New York Chamber of Commerce and to many prominent people, pleading for the ample "Poet's Park" which would save the cottage from the, to her, sacrilege of moving it from its own place, as against the paltry "Poe Park" across the road to which it must be dragged. The American Authors' Guild joined in these pleadings and

protests, and its officers appeared with ours before Mayor Strong in their behalf. All in vain. Within the next few years the city of New York created the cheap park intended for the cottage. But the city would not pay the price for it which its owner demanded. So he simply drew it back out of the reach of Mr. Haffen's Kingsbridge Road "improvement" which then went on to cut down the groves and blast away the rocks of the romantic spot as the poet knew it, the cottage itself being huddled close to the new house of the owner, three or four times its size!

And also ever since that time Mr. Appleton Morgan has represented himself as the *originator* of what was in truth Mrs. Peirce's plan, and has not ceased to advertise himself as the saviour of the Poe cottage by means of the small park known as the "Poe Park" and to receive much honor and commendation therefor from Poe lovers and biographers, whereas what *he* proposed to the Street Commissioners of New York when his Shakespeare Society had failed to buy it was—that it should be moved up to Bronx Park!

Because the foundation for an apartment house is now being blasted next to the Poe cottage, the city has offered and the owner has accepted for it \$3000, and it will shortly be moved across Kingsbridge Road to the Poe Park. That there is even this insignificant plot for it to be moved to, is wholly owing to the sympathy and co-operation with Mrs. Peirce of the "Home" as founded by my associates and myself for "needy brain workers." Had we not seconded her effort by our meetings at our (then) Fordham Branch, the Poe Park would never have been heard of, and the unfortunate cottage would either have been condemned and destroyed by the city when the Kingsbridge Road was widened, or, according

to the suggestion of its worst enemy, it would have been moved a mile or two northward to Bronx Park.

To myself it seems time that in this so-called "rescue" of the Poe cottage, the literary world, at least, should now "give honor where honor is due."

#### FINANCIAL STATEMENT

of the Expenditures and Receipts of the Poe Cottage Preservation Committee of The Home Hotel (now the Mary Fisher Home) in 1895-96, as Condensed from the Home Hotel Annual Report for 1895-97.

#### EXPENDITURES.

For typewriting, printing, postage and carfare.. \$181.18

#### RECEIPTS.

From Miss Vanderpoel, Mrs. Marion Harland, Mrs. Theodore Thomas, Mr. Abram G. Mills, Mr. Wm. D. McCracken.....	38.00
From the Committee—Miss Mary A. Fisher, Chairman, .....	10.00
Mrs. M. Fay Peirce, Sect.-Treas.....	<u>133.18</u>
Total .....	\$181.18

#### ROSE McALISTER COLEMAN'S LETTER.

167 West 73rd Street,  
New York, January 10th, 1913.

My dear Miss Fisher:

Your letter relating to the Poe Cottage was welcome and interested me, as I knew through Mrs. M. Fay Peirce of the hard work you ladies did in trying to save the

grounds as well as the cottage. During Mayor McClellan's administration another effort was made by the "Women's Auxiliary to the American Scenic and Historic Preservation Society," Miss Vanderpoel, President. At that time I was Chairman of the Committee. We worked hard and secured an option on the cottage, hoping the City would then buy it. After much deliberation the plan was turned down, as Comptroller Metz of the Department of Finance declared that "to acquire the cottage at the price named (six thousand dollars) would be a wanton waste of public funds."

I hoped at the time of the Poe Centenary that the money would be raised, but all in vain. This last autumn, Hon. Cyrus C. Miller, President of the Borough of the Bronx, with the approval of Park Commissioner Higgins, found they could secure the property for three thousand dollars and with an added two thousand move it into the park on a new foundation. It was necessary to act at once, as plans had been filed to erect some large apartment houses adjoining the property. I wrote Mr. Miller asking if I could help in any way, and at his suggestion sent a letter to the newspapers. The Post, Times and Tribune published it. I also wrote a letter to the Board of Estimate and Apportionment, and communicated with Alderman Becker from this district.

You will see from the above that the credit for saving the cottage is due to President Miller, and I hasten to assure you that my part has only been a very modest one. I trust that the City will take every precaution to keep the cottage as it was originally.

If you can send me any details, as you knew the house in your early days, I shall take pleasure in forwarding such an account to Mr. Miller.

I am sure we rejoice that the cottage is saved after

these years of effort. I visited Poe's grave in Baltimore some years ago, and it was then in a deplorable condition, but I believe it has since been restored.

With greetings from a "Poe lover,"

ROSE MCALISTER COLEMAN.

(Mrs. John C.)

Miss Mary Fisher,  
325 Highland Ave.,  
Mount Vernon, N. Y.

#### CLOSING THOUGHTS.

Prof. Vincenzo Botta, who held the chair of literature at Columbia, had been one of the intimate friends of the poet. Mrs. Botta drew around her at her weekly receptions the most intellectual and cultured people, and she was never tired of speaking to us of the poet as she showed us his portrait—as we gazed upon it a soul of sadness seemed to speak to us out of his magnificent eyes. She was always indignant when any one associated intemperance with him, and she would tell us that so delicate was his organism that one glass of wine would affect his sensitive brain and make him dizzy.

Miss Elizabeth Bisland, that brilliant writer, tells us that it is not to Irving nor Hawthorne that the honor belongs for creating the modern short-story in America, it belongs to Poe, he bestowed upon it those rare gifts of his—a reasoning power of unusual subtlety, an imagination of extraordinary vividness, a wonderful faculty of observation, and, above all, a mind wholly unfettered by tradition. He could recognize completely the artistic possibilities of the short-story. He brought to it the highest genius not only of his age, but of his nation, for, in poetry and in short-story writing, Poe stands first in

the literature of America. When we realize how poorly he lived, how cruelly he was imprisoned in a provincial, Philistine environment, how poverty forced him from the pursuit of perfection to earn his bread by meagrely paid journalism, and the work of a fag on a magazine—and how very short, after all, was his unhappy existence—to have created so many classics was a sufficient record of well-doing. And yet this poor young priest of art was driven to death in the desert. Minor poets jealous of his genius, and the reviewers who catered to them, invented scandals and rated him as an inebriate—this man who before he was forty years of age had produced sixteen volumes, had evolved an entirely new style in verse, and in it produced half a dozen classic lyrics, who had created the only important criticism done in America up to that time. Every work that came from his hand was created with the painstaking toil of the exact artist. No victim of alcohol could produce a work like this—only a clear and bright brain could have accomplished what he did. No inebriate can labor continuously, devotedly, patiently as he did.

And what has been done in the memory of this great American poet? Edward Payson Terhune, that able journalist who can discern the genius of Poe, speaks thus—

"This asinine prejudice against him has denied him a niche in the Hall of Fame as recently as 1900, although names were put there which the public scarcely knew of." Surely a monumental tower, a cathedral of art erected to his memory could not be a hall of fame too glorious for this poet.

The writer well remembers as a child going occasionally with her father to Kingsbridge in the lumbering old stage that passed by the home of this poet. It was indeed

as Mrs. Peirce describes it—a spot of rural simplicity and beauty surrounded by nature. How beautiful it would have been if the noble effort of Mrs. Peirce had been carried out—the grounds restored to their original simplicity and beauty, and a park built 'round this cottage.

Little do we know what this poet's sensitive soul must have suffered. A fragile young wife whom he dearly loved, slowly dying of consumption, sitting beside him as he wrote his manuscripts and without the means of providing for her the necessary medicines and nourishment that she needed.

As his chronicler, Edward Terhune, continues: "With his child-wife, died all that was youthful and buoyant in Poe's own heart. Read *Anabell Lee*, the poem inspired by Virginia's death, if you would learn how he mourned her. To a friend soon afterward he wrote: 'I see no one among the living as beautiful as my sweet little wife. I loved her more and more dearly during the years of her illness until I became insane.'"

#### A BEAUTIFUL LETTER.

The Century Magazine of April, 1914, gives the following letter of Edwin Bjorkman to President Woodrow Wilson on this subject of recognition to American men of letters:

MR. PRESIDENT:

Your entire career as student, scholar, educator, and administrator constitutes a guaranty that you deem the spiritual development of a people no less important than its material welfare. It is also a guaranty of your ability to interpret the word "spiritual" in the broadest and most constructive sense. Thus I feel prompted to place be-

fore you a question that has been fermenting in my mind for a long time.

Will this nation, as a nation, never do anything for the encouragement or reward of its poets and men of letters?

The problem involved is a vexatious one, for many hold that such recognition ill-bestowed is worse than none at all, and genius bears no infallible mark by which it may be known to everybody. Furthermore, genius is at once proud and shy, while unscrupulous mediocrity is ever ready to usurp its place. But no matter how great the difficulty may be, I am convinced that this question must be faced sooner or later, and that some effort must be made to solve the problems connected with it; for the soul of a nation is in its literature.

In pleading for your consideration of this matter, I am not unaware that from time to time a Lowell, a Hawthorne, a Howells has been sent to represent the nation abroad or assigned to some small government position at home. But instances of this kind have been too few. They have mostly been traceable to the action of some person in power rather than to the nation itself. And they represent a form of acknowledgment that must be held equally unsatisfactory to the man appointed and to the service into which he is appointed.

Despite such crumbs, I insist that this nation, as a nation, has done nothing. Officially its poets do not exist, unless it be as numbers connected with the enforcement of the copyright laws. The several States comprised within the Union have done as little. Even private generosity, ordinarily lavish, has remained singularly indifferent to the needs and claims of literature.

Financial support is not the only thing I have in mind now, although the granting of it to writers of promise

represents one of the most important aspects of the question to which I am trying to draw your attention. I am thinking of any and every step that may be taken by this nation in recognition of the services rendered by its men of letters in general, and in particular by its creative, imaginative writers of prose and verse.

To my knowledge there is no other civilized country that has been guilty of such indifference or lack of foresight. Every Western nation except our own seems to have devised some way of acknowledging promise or proved merit in those building its national poetry. England knights them or places them on its civil list. France gives them the Legion of Honor or elects them to the Academy. My native Sweden has its Academy, too, as well as a system of literary stipends, not to mention the Nobel prize, for which the nation as such can take no credit. Little Norway, which relatively has done more for modern literature during the last fifty years than any other country in the world, has been making annual allowances of public money to struggling young writers since 1863.

I mention these facts not as examples of what must needs be done, but as illustrations of what may be done. I mention them not as ideal solutions of the problem at hand, but as evidence that other nations, wiser than our own, have at least endeavored to solve that problem.

Here there are neither academies nor pantheons, except "self-made" ones, which, because of their origin, are lacking in the required prestige. There are no hereditary distinctions, no decorations of honor; and we do not want them. There is no laureateship, and no poet's dole to be given before or after achievement. There is not even a Westminster Abbey to which the nation might relegate the bones of its dead poets with some semblance of dignity.

It is easy to answer that a tomb remembered or a tomb forgot will make no difference to the man buried within it. But such is human nature that the mere hope of a final resting-place in some poets' corner becomes not only an incentive, but an actual reward, because the individual member feels himself a participant in the honor accruing to the profession in its entirety.

When a Peary reaches the north pole, Congress feels impelled to take special action for the reward of his deed. But it has apparently never occurred to anybody in Congress or out of it that the conquest of both poles means nothing to us in comparison with the everlasting possession of those delectable lands of fancy discovered by a Mark Twain.

It might almost be said that poetry is the one form of legitimate human activity that has obtained no official recognition for those pursuing it. At this point of my pleading, your thought may turn to the Library of Congress. But that otherwise admirable institution does not hold the same relationship to the man of letters that the Department of Agriculture holds to the farmer, or the Department of Commerce and Labor to the merchant and the mechanic. It has been designed for the public, not for the poet, and even his accomplished work will count for little within its walls until he has passed far beyond the trials and triumphs of human life.

Neither in quantity nor in quality can the poetry so far produced by this nation be held commensurate to its greatness in other fields. A connection between this comparative backwardness and the absence of any conscious effort to foster a national poetry will, of course, be hard to prove. But I, for one, believe that such a connection exists. And I believe that we shall never raise our poetry to the level of our other achievements until

we, as a nation, try to find some method of providing money for the poet's purse and laurels for his brow.

I believe, too, that any official recognition of the services rendered to the nation by its singers and storytellers and playwrights and essayists and critics will have additional value as a sign both to the nation itself and to the rest of the world that it has begun to turn in earnest from that preoccupation with material affairs which in the past has been named as one of its worst shortcomings. Whatever its detractors at home and abroad may say to the contrary, this nation is by no means lacking in idealism. It is, indeed, full of lofty dreams and pure ambitions. All it needs is to give this side of itself a chance. That it do so is the ultimate object of my present appeal.

I come to you, Mr. President, with no definite plan of action, with no panaceas of my own or other people's making, with no detailed demands or minutely formulated desires. I am purposely restricting myself to that one general, all-inclusive question, in order that the possible ineffectiveness of my own ideas may not furnish weapons for those who are hostile to the principle itself. There is no personal expectation or private ambition behind my question. I have simply learned by bitter experience what it means to strive for sincere artistic expression in a field where brass is commonly valued above gold. And I should like to see the road made a little less hard, and the goal a little more attractive, lest too many of those that come after lose their courage and let themselves be tempted by the incessant clangor of metal in the market-place.

My eyes, with those of many others, have been following you from day to day. My faith has been growing steadily as I watched. I have gradually come to feel

that in you the country has found that rarest of public servants: a wise man whose wisdom has not lamed his power of acting firmly and strongly. I know that you have studied human nature as it is, as it has been, and as it may become. I know that you understand us, both those who have been born here and those who have come from other countries in search of a keener air and better chances. I know that you discern clearly what can and what cannot be done. For all these reasons I believe that you are the man to lead in this.

I am making this appeal on behalf of a profession which is dear to me for more reasons than that it is my own—the art of interpreting man to himself by means of the divine power that lies hidden in the word. I am making it on behalf of men and women who are striving against tremendous odds to give this nation a poetry equaling in worth and glory that of any other nation in the world. But I trust that you at least will perceive that, first and last and most of all, I am making this appeal on behalf of the nation itself.

Without the literature that radiates truth as well as beauty, that soul must wither.

The time has come, I feel, when this nation, for the saving of its own soul, must give serious and loving thought to its poets and men of letters. Some one whom the people trust must take the first step in the new direction: there is to-day probably no one whom they trust to a greater extent than you, and I can think of no other fitter for the task I suggest.

This admirable letter of Edwin Bjorkman voices the opinion of many Americans. And in this age of progress, when there is a tendency and a movement for a universal democracy, we have every reason to hope that

before very long there may be this recognition so much needed.

Our Tenafly Home is beautifully situated with lovely grounds and one hundred lofty trees. A short walk from the station and trolley line, library and churches. Visitors are always welcome.

We are sadly in need of a new building. Will not some one do this for us, as a memorial to some loved one who has passed away?

MARY A. FISHER,

The Mary Fisher Home,  
Tenafly, N. J.







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